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# VAGA.

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A NOVEL.



# VAGA;

OR,

## A VIEW OF NATURE.

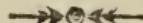
IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY  
MRS. PECK,

AUTHOR OF THE MAID OF AVON, WELCH PEASANT BOY,  
YOUNG ROSINIERE, &c.

“At length Sancho said to his master, ‘Please, Sir, to ask Mr. Ape, whether the affair of the Cave be true? for begging your Worship’s pardon, I don’t believe a word of it.’—The Monkey being accordingly consulted, the answer was, *that part was true, and part false.*”

SECOND EDITION.



VOL. I.

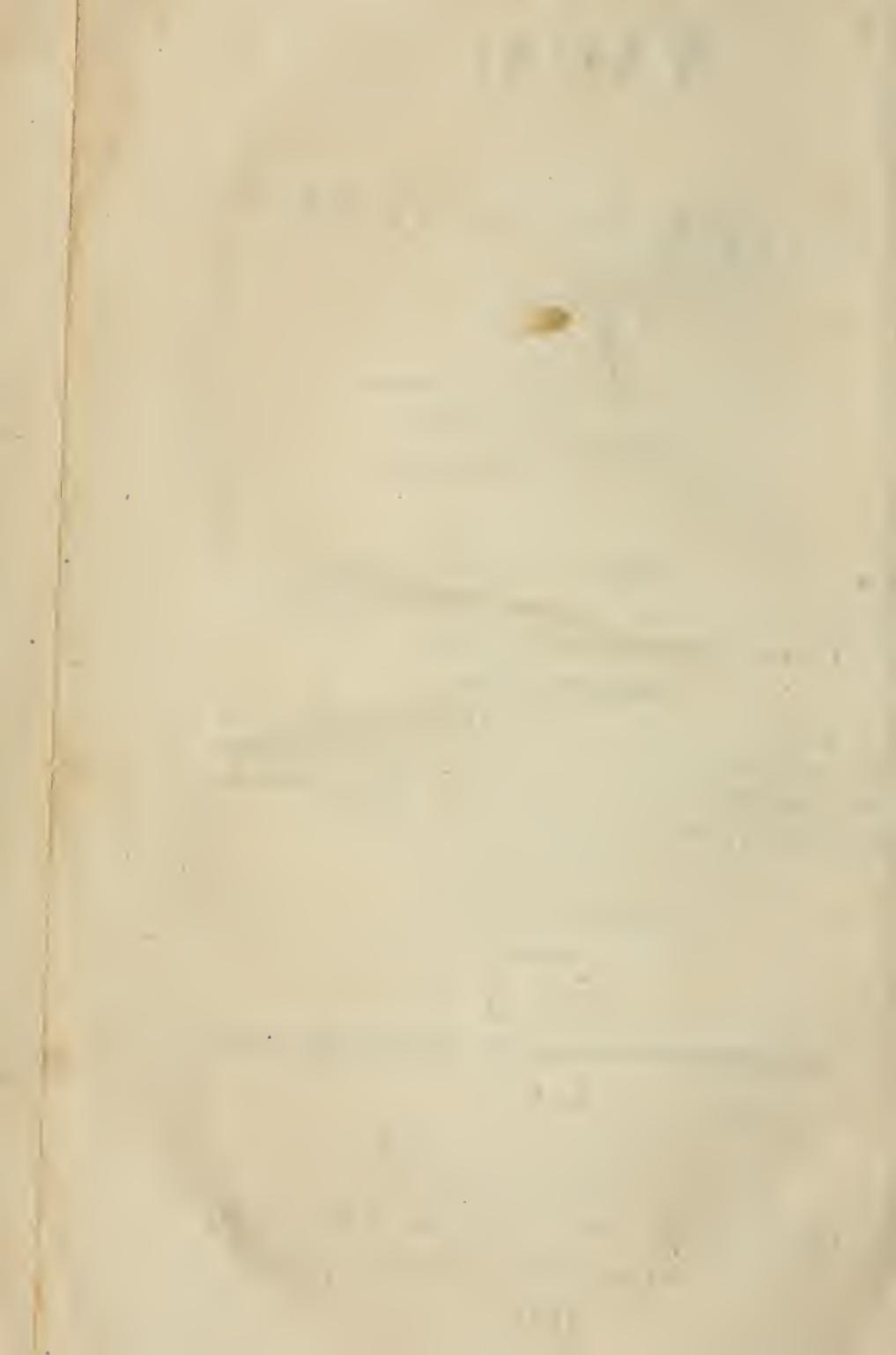
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# VAGA;

OR

## A VIEW OF NATURE.

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### CHAPTER 1.

FIVE months had now marked the interval since the remains of the venerable Rory the Brave were interred in the abbey of Holy Cross, near the tomb of the founder.

The purple glow of evening was diffused over the scene: the sun, gradually declining, glanced a thousand shifting lights over all the air—which, touching the lower points of the distant mountains, was seen blush-

ing on the tops of the hills—then darting in red beams on the level plain, while the summer breeze, stealing over the aromatic herbage of the generous soil, wafted refreshment around. Vaga—loitering in the path, gathering wild flowers, and inhaling the delicious fragrance they breathed—heard herself addressed—

“ Young maiden! can you direct me to the good old chieftain of these domains, called Rory the Brave?”

“ He rests in yonder abbey,” said Vaga.

“ What! the venerable ruin I have just passed?”

“ The same, stranger.”

“ Very extraordinary this!” replied her interrogator, his eyes fixed on the decayed structure.

“ Aye,” rejoined Vaga: “ *man* is, in himself, a page of *wonder*, and his

life's end an enigma to the existing world."

" Ah!" interposed the traveller quickly—" can it then be, that I have journeyed in vain?"—A cloud of grief gathered on his brow: tears swelled into his eyes—" yet" (tremulously expressed) " may not other changes—the caprices of fortune—the vicissitudes incident to human affairs—have conspired...."

" To level with the dust, a chieftain," said Vaga.

The stranger bowed his head—  
" 'Tis even so then! Rory the Brave is dead!"

" To you, and to me," said Vaga: " yet does he, I hope, still live."

The traveller, now resting on his cane, seemed to regard this daughter of laconism with an expression half doubtful, half reproachful. A deep

blush lighted up the rapid variation of the countenance.—He started, and turned aside; then, awaking, as it were, from *rêverie*, after a moment's hesitation, he observed:

“Lady! I am from distant climes, that lie within the sun’s embrace!—*Nature* trained me—not *art*. The sincere savage is unsophisticated man. Rude, as the desert in which he was bred—and free as the air around him—he acts agreeably to the suggestions of his instinct, as proposed by natural reason, and immediately derived from the first law of our being—self-preservation!—He loves, and *feels* he is beloved: he hates, and *feels* that he is hated. In battle, he “fights the fear of death,” and calls it living—to *die* in defence of his wife, his children, and his country. Every man in his tribe he thinks a brother. In the uncor-

rupted state of his being, justice is the basis of the mental law that governs him—because, under this expression, to real crime positive punishment is attached—to real good, a reward proportionate to the merit of the action. *Justice* is *principle*, and *principle* is *virtue*; and the whole may be reduced into one primitive term, *universal right*:—that is, all men being equal in the sight of Heaven, so should they, as brethren, be regarded alike equal on earth; for justice is equity—and equity is relative equality!—Nature signifies this; and an unlettered people, subordinate to its voice—united in a body, defend, assist, and support each other, all in their respective observance of their elected king, and a nation's interest—thus establishing their natural rights, their general preservation, and their common existence.—

Such," continued the animated speaker, "is the order of the savage race—in its original hardihood, perhaps, barbarously great—and, in its primeval simplicity, blending with the sublime the beautiful! Contrasted with cultivated man, how the primeval character rises in the scale! because here we see a picture of the species, not shackled by the sophistical impositions of the artist and the philosopher—not a creature of imitation, fashioned by the introduction of prejudice and opinion—but man, original man, enamoured with nature, and at liberty to follow her genuine rules. Lady! to this rude sect do I belong:—speak plainly, then: respect an honest meaning, and an untutored heart: wave modern manners, and a false refinement."

" I have spoken truly," said Vaga.

" But not intelligibly," retorted the stranger.

“ Life and death are one,” said Vaga; “ for a good man always lives.”

“ Lady! you now emerge from the obscure; and there is some illumination in your language.”

“ When the sun breaks through a dark cloud,” said Vaga, “ the light falling on the deep mass of shade which veils the heavens, in its strength and beauty must needs be said to express ineffable excellence: and illustrations, to be borrowed from it, seem, in the spirit of the sublime, to display the glory of angels, and point to the origin of man.”

“ True!” replied the stranger: “ yet doth it demand the whole sagacity of reason to be thus understood.”

“ I cannot see,” said Vaga, “ how your words apply, because that which is evident, is obvious to the feeblest understanding.”

“Lady! we all live, and know we are placed here, without dreaming why or wherefore. Existence is, of itself, sufficient to some—the end to which it is directed, the care only of a few.”

“The sun is the source of life,” said Vaga; “and, as such, it means the power which animates and moves the universe.”

“Lady! that is our heathen doctrine.”

“Call it what you please,” said Vaga: “yet is it truth, eternal and unalterable. The sun unites in its great and transcendent body all the divine attributes: its presence animates and illuminates the whole of the terrestrial world: its properties are essential to the existence of things: it is an emanation from the Deity, placed before the senses of man: it is

one and universal; and its perfectibility is applicable to the majesty of God."

At this pause, the stranger, with an air of enthusiasm, lifting the hat from his head—his black hair, glossy and silky, fell in luxuriant profusion over his shoulders; and the whole of his face, now bared to the view, in its peculiar character and color, beamed much of beauty.

Vaga started.

"Lady! do I alarm you?"

"A little," said Vaga.

"Then rest content," replied the stranger; "for danger is not in me.— Yet, in the spirit of innocence I speak it, much of my heart is with you.— Yes, I feel as if I had known you before—as if we had met, I cannot tell where.... Perhaps, according to that Pythagoras of whom I have heard,

in some age gone by—perhaps in the bosom of my country!—That *nameless something*,” continued he, “ floating throughout your form . . . the parted lip, a *bed of roses*, and *love’s little world* . . . those accents so dear and familiar . . . the *naïveté* playing about you . . . Vision, vision all! but sweet, how sweet is the delusion! . . . Lady! my speech, though apparently chimerical, is nevertheless true . . . This heart of mine, believe it, has never wronged, nor these lips deceived, the being Heaven created.—Ask me what estranged me from my home, and sent me wandering? . . . Sentiment! . . . Ask me my commission hither? . . . Love! . . . Demand of my heart its master feeling? . . . Duty! . . . Am I a man? . . . A romantic savage, lady! of woman born . . . neither more, nor less.—Am I happy? . . . Once I was;

and what has been, may be again.... Am I rich?.... If a mind at ease signifies wealth, then am I poor: but, and if dross be treasure, then am I rich.—Lady! look here!” displaying to the view a case, richly inlaid, and filled with precious stones. “ The treasure you now behold, was intended as a tribute of affection to Rory the Brave, from Tartane, his *banished* son.”

“ Ha!” said Vaga—“ he was a youth in whom his father took delight. Often have I heard the chieftain describe the spirit that with him grew—manly, magnanimous ; his heart glowing with honest love—his bosom burning with patriotic fire—his nature joyfully acknowledging its affiance with the *whole* of the human race ;—and the proud ambition of his rising years, the glory and welfare of his country !

—A courteous gentleman too, if liberality, sweetness, and sensibility, be engaging: but good qualities may not be rightly understood:—individuals being enslaved to selfish prejudices, and thus biassed in their judgement, can a sentence resulting from their *private interest*, be considered as fair?—and for the multitude, though its suffrage is invariably given to virtue—its sanction does not always include protection.—Envy sickened at the excellence of the young Tartane: *malice* misrepresented him; and in disgust he left his native land.—Such are the particulars that conspired to his exile:—but of his succeeding fate all here are ignorant.”

“Lady! your language and sentiments excite in me an emotion irrepressible!—May I inquire, who are you?”

“Traveller! I cannot resolve your

question ; for I do not know myself.—A father's caresses, nor a mother's love, ne'er tuned my infant tongue to grateful sounds of joy :—Though lisping, self-taught, I may have poured out my thanks to parents full as dear—Heaven and sweet nature.”

“ Wondrous ! wondrous creature !” —and the stranger once more bowed his head.

“ My story is marvellous indeed,” said Vaga: “ and, if you please, I'll give you the outline :—

“ It chanced, one morning, the lamented chieftain, rising with the dawn —by taste and inspiration called—bent his footsteps along the verdant turf. With fixed gaze he stopped, hailing the blushing sun.—His eye then fell on the flowery level, inundated with blood.—My childish wail, though feebly poured, struck to his heart ; and,

guided by the attentive Echo murmuring over the river banks, from a bed of rushes he drew forth the body of a man, to which I clung.—The mangled form in every gash seemed to find a tongue; while, with asking looks, piteous, I spread my infant hands, and cried, ‘ Massa! poor slave be dead: but baby be too young to die.’—Humanity, warm as love, kindling soft passion in the sage’s breast, he caught me to his heart, mitigating, with gracious drops of pity, the sharp pangs of a child’s distress. As I grew to his paternal bosom, from nerve to nerve divine conception thrilled. . . . His mind, pregnant with inspiration, sent forward a daring look to heaven; and, nature laboring for light and action, the child of fancy bursting into birth, with all a father’s joy the aged chieftain greeted me, and from that hour called me his

daughter; until his heap of years verging to the brink, he closed his eyes, alas! on this terrestrial scene.—O! sad reverse to me!"

Vaga paused, and, drying the tears that had begun to flow, in a voice broken by tenderness, once more resumed her narrative—

" My benefactor laid in the earth, his second son, and presumptive heir to his estates, straight arrived.—Weeping I stood before him: sullen rancor was in his looks:—‘ Madam,’ said he, ‘ the day of an old man’s dotage is now past; and ’tis time you should be taught to fill your proper station.’ . . . At these words, a man, habited as a mendicant, entered, and, uncovering his head, begged for bread. . . . Suddenly, I saw the florid glow on the countenance of the haughty master, change to a deadly paleness.—‘ Begone!’ said

he to me; and I retired; but had scarcely measured half the adjoining gallery, when, hearing him and the mendicant approach, timorous I paused.—‘Impostor!’ cried the former—‘away!—A contemptuous smile passed over the features of the poor petitioner, which inflaming the irritated passions of this imperious man, he was proceeding to violence.—Impulse governed me:—pleading the cause of humble indigence, I rushed forward.—‘Follow him then!’ exclaimed he aloud: ‘quit my house, and, with a beggar, find your proper level.’

Tears stood in the stranger’s eyes; and a tender enthusiasm stealing over his mind, a mingled sensation of indignation and anxiety rose in his breast, and he pronounced with quickness—“The Christian, who professes to ‘love mercy, and walk humbly be-

fore God,' yet, so rigorous, and hard of heart!"

" 'Tis certain his conduct was severe," said Vaga: " yet I call the day on which he threw me to my fate, a happy one; for, in the mendicant, I found a second father."

" You astonish me."

" I was myself astonished," said Vaga: " but you shall hear.—The petitioner was not what he appeared to be. He had seen much of the world, and suffered more:—disappointments rendered him skeptical:—he doubted others, because he had been often deceived.—Nor was he entirely mistaken in his calculation on man:—he put him to some trial; and the proof was, that riches harden the heart.—Like him, I was a sorrower, though not, like him, friendless; for

he cherished and protected me.—‘ I have my necessities,’ said this good man; ‘ but am far from being in want.—The proud, the callous, and inflexible,’ continued he, ‘ has, this day, read to you your first lesson; and my experience offers you counsel upon it.—Covet not wealth, to the perversion of your principles; for prosperity is sometimes the region of perdition. Let the rigor you have endured, teach you to sympathise with each and every fellow sufferer; and, though poor, you will be enriched by your own virtue.’—Yes!” (her eyes now streaming with tears of tender acknowledgement) “ Both being afflicted, in pity to my miseries, he was kind to me; and I repay with gratitude the beneficence of the good Angelo.”

Here all the stranger’s spirit shone

in his countenance : he respired quick —“ Angelo !” re-echoed he—“ did you say Angelo ?”

“ Yes,” replied Vaga—“ 'Tis the name of my protector.”

“ That name is very dear to me,” said the stranger, with emotion ; “ for I once had a friend, whom I so called” . . . . He stopped ; remembrance pressed upon his heart, and he burst into a flood of tears.

Vaga felt her bosom swell with affectionate sympathy ; and, as she continued to gaze on the tender expression that characterised the stranger, her reason could scarcely overcome an involuntary and unaccountable emotion. —The traveller looked up, and, happening to catch the animated meaning stamped on her features—“ Yes !” thought he—“ every amiable quality of the mind expands in benevolence to

all around: and this young woman—trained in the school of adversity, knowing what it is to endure—can feel for all that suffer; and, though she cannot, perhaps, remove the misfortunes of others, it is at least in her power to soften them by sympathy and tenderness."

Vaga read what passed in the stranger's mind.—Again she felt his look at her heart, and again she felt inspired with a solemn sensation that she could in no way define; and giving the rein to her naturally quick fancy, her agitation increased;—which the traveller perceiving, faintly articulated something like an apology—

" My spirits are weak," said he; " and tenderness enfeebles fortitude."

" Sir!" said Vaga, " are all the men of your country".... She stopped, and, blushing at the precipitancy of her

feelings, leaving the last sentence unfinished, turned her burning face aside.

“ The men of my country,” said the stranger energetically, “ are the children of simplicity and nature ; and all the sweet affections of the heart are the reflected images of innocence and truth. . . . . Hence it is, that simplicity of manners is classed among the social virtues ; because the man of simple manners knows no happiness but in a union of pure and affectionate hearts ; and this fraternal sentiment, extended to a whole nation, constitutes the general security of its citizens, inasmuch as it tends to promote love of country, and devotion to the public cause !— Our people, then,” continued he, pursuing this train of thought, “ may be said to have attained the summit of what is called moral virtue ; for these tender attachments form a joint inte-

rest, and are the source both of external and internal prosperity : yet am I a voluntary wanderer from that happy land—self-exiled, and doomed to pass the remainder of my days in banishment and sorrow.”—Here the stranger once more, as if struck by some sudden recollection, and overwhelmed by it—seeming to bend in hopeless grief over the past—bowed down his head, and wept.

Vaga was for a moment silent : but her tears bore testimony to her generous concern for the stranger ; and, anxious to soften his affliction, she at length said—“ Our acquaintance, though short, is yet long enough to warrant the duties of sympathising humanity. You appear weary, and your spirits are sinking fast.—I cannot doubt the account you have given of yourself ; and, if you will honor our little cottage

with a visit, the kindness and hospitality of its master may cheer and comfort you."

The stranger sensibly felt this courtesy: it reanimated the last faint hope at his heart; and, struggling to acquire firmness, with the same frankness with which the offer was made, he accepted it.

" You are very good," said he: " for, having, about two hours since, somehow missed my guide, were it not for your kindness, I should indeed be at a loss for a night's lodging: but" (smiling) " you look like a divinity, and, in the present instance, appear to be my guardian sprite."

On reaching the cottage, Vaga led the way to the sitting-room; and throwing open the casement, the embowering honeysuckles breathed their sweet fragrance into the apartment.—

The traveller cast an anxious glance around, which Vaga comprehending, as she placed for him a chair, observed — “I would lament the absence of the good Angelo from home, only that he is engaged in works of benevolence: for, being skilled in physic, he is gone to visit a few poor patients in the neighbourhood. His stay, however, cannot be very long; and, until his return, you will be pleased to regard me as his representative.”

The stranger smiled a grateful assent, and having taken the offered seat, Vaga spread before him all the simple luxury which this little rural retreat afforded, and, bidding him welcome, displayed a picture of all the sweet courtesies of social virtue.

The traveller’s spirits somewhat revived by refreshment, he began to converse with Vaga on the state of Ireland,

and, discovering an eager curiosity on the subject, listened with evident emotion to the detail she gave of the late rebellion, together with its lamentable effects, instanced in the union with Great Britain.

“ The Irish people,” said Vaga, “ in their feelings, conduct, and principles, adopt no middle course: the virtues and vices of humanity have their extremes in Ireland:—yet, their barbarisms may be accounted to proceed from accidental, not natural causes. A *subdued* people resemble the netted lion, *unfairly conquered*; and there can be no sincere friendship between the oppressor and the oppressed. The Irish character is brave, generous, and independent:—ardent in their affections, and impatient of injury, they are hasty, and perhaps violent, in their resentments: but then, let it be re-

membered, the *Irish people are far from implacable*.—Cultivate their love, upon the broad basis of equal rights; and they will love you:—call for their forgiveness, even under the pressure of abuses; and pacific toleration shall be permanently secured to the oppressors of this mismanaged island. 'Tis a curious truth," continued she, " that this disposition to indulgence among the Irish should fail to sow the seeds of that political philosophy between the sister countries, which must necessarily promote the interests and safety of both nations: for, as ascendency and emancipation tend to divide the people, were the former abolished, and the latter freely granted, the necessary result of such a happy measure would be, that the inhabitants of Ireland and England would be as one family—their affections consolidated;

and their interests blended.—But, as it is," (and Vaga sighed heavily) " instead of good faith and unanimity, this poor subjugated land has experienced much of treachery :—her discontents have been fomented, and inflamed into rebellion, till at length the total overthrow of Irish independence was accomplished by the Act of Union."

" England," said the stranger, " is a free country ; and the law of right and equality, in the order of nature, prescribes, through the medium of our own rights, the rights of others, and enjoins us—" Do not unto others the evil which thou wouldest not they should do unto thee."

" The quotation is apt," replied Vaga ; " and, methinks, 'tis worthy of remark, that you, stranger, are so well read in the Christian law, and the prophets!"

The traveller smiled, and, with an

animated expression of delight that spoke the ingenuousness and simplicity of a mind formed more by thought than learning, answered—" As the practice of virtue is the natural operation of intellect, so is religious principle the reflected image of universal nature, like the creative spirit, identified with the existence of man. In fine, it is the stamp of the Divinity, which every human being bears in his heart!—Yes, lady!" (his energy increasing) " In the first state of things, as relating to the earliest order of time, man was originally savage:—yet, with regard to the power that governs the world, was he sometimes intelligent and always influenced by the idea of a presiding Deity; for, in the first days, man saw " God in clouds;”—and, simple in the infancy of his reason, hence his worship of the

sun and moon, adored under their proper forms, as figurative emblems of the great source of life!—But, for myself," proceeded he with quickness, " pagan I am none:—the religion of evidence and truth is mine:—I have been instructed in the whole doctrine of Christianity by a native of this island, whom Heaven sent, deputed to bless, and disseminate knowledge among our people" . . . . Pausing with quivering lip—the expression of vivacity in the stranger's face was now succeeded by a deep shade of regret; and, wiping away the tears that trembled in his eyes, he added—" Yes, my dear young lady! that rare man, hailed as a new light by a darkened but innocent race, taught me, and many more of our people, Christianity; and, by virtue of its positions, I am not a little proud to say, confirmed our primitive system of di-

vine worship in all its natural simplicity——because we love, in our species, the divine power that created us;—for *true* religion advises to fraternal regards—upon which positive command, depends the perfection of man, his happiness, and his preservation.”

After some time longer passed in conversation to the preceding effect, the stranger, evidently overcome by fatigue, sunk in his chair, into a profound sleep. Vaga meanwhile repaired to the old widow, whose cottage her benefactor rented, in order to direct the necessary arrangements for the stranger’s accommodation during the night; which being completed—anxious for Angelo’s return, she strolled out to meet him.

The sun had shed his last light; and his reflexion, in rosy hue, still colored the mountain’s top, while the moon,

appearing and disappearing at intervals through the clouds, now and then gleamed in the setting ray, breaking the gathering twilight.

Vaga, as she wound into her favorite path—the rich valley leading to the abbey—seeing a groupe of cottage children, inquired of them concerning her protector; and, having been told that he was seen to enter the abbey a few minutes before, quickening her pace, she soon gained the antique structure. A low querulous sound of sorrow issued from within—Vaga started; and the mourning continuing—“It is the voice of the good Angelo!” cried she, passing on with quicker steps, though retarded in her progress by the frequent interruptions of broken ground.

This building (founded in 1169, by Carbragh O’Brien, king of Limerick,

in honor of a piece of the cross, said to have been received by Murtagh, a former monarch, from pope Paschal II. in 1110, and deposited in this abbey) united to the fame of the holy relique the charms of beautiful architecture.

—The fabric supports a high steeple, exquisitely constructed, and supported, in the centre, and on each side, by Gothic arches. The nave is lined by an arcade of four arches, with lateral aisles; and what fragments of workmanship remain throughout the ruin, were, when perfect, fine specimens of the art, both in design and execution.

The south side of the abbey, now shone upon by the moonlight gleaming through the eastern window, Vaga discovered her benefactor standing beside the monument of Rory the Brave.

His head was uncovered: his hands were raised, with his eyes towards

heaven ; and the sick languor of dejection was but too apparent in his pallid countenance.—“ O my father ! ” ejaculated he—“ is it beneath the cold marble that your poor exile now seeks all that remains to him of you ? Look down upon me (if permitted) and see that your wise precepts have not, for the most part, been bestowed in vain ; for I endeavour to practise the greatness of mind, that can at once suffer, and reason” . . . . He would have proceeded : but, perceiving Vaga, — the character of sadness in his features softened into a tender, but anxious expression ; and, seemingly overpowered by a confusion of ideas, he stood silent and motionless.

Astonishment and impatience were strongly pictured in the countenance of Vaga ; when, giving herself up to the impression made by those words

spoken in soliloquy by her protector—pointing to the tomb of the late chief, she said with quickness——“ After a dreary pause of blank existence, say, Angelo, tell me, does the father awake again in the spirit of the son?”

“ Hold!” said he, hastily interrupting her.

“ Nay, nay,” interposed Vaga, resisting the command, “ confirm what your language has implied; and, if you are indeed the being I suspect”....

“ I addressed *the father*,” said he, interrupting her a second time; “ and have we not all one common father?”

Vaga felt the full force of this reply: yet a thousand questionable thoughts arose in her mind.—“ Angelo!” said she tremulously, “ why speak to me in parables?”

“ Because I would not bear heavy on your heart,” said he.

“ Oh !”—and Vaga caught his hand between her own—“ fear not my heart.”

Her benefactor started.—A flood of tenderness swam in his eyes—“ Dear girl !” said he, “ *enthusiasm* has its *frosts* : for, in the days of my youth, I was, like you, an enthusiast : but the warm glow has become chilled in the world : old age has snowed upon this head :—nothing remains to me of life, but the remembrance that I once had lived.”—His voice sunk, as he pronounced the last words : but, making a visible effort to rouse himself, he added—“ Yet, have I not, in *you*, found myself again ?—Yes, sweet innocent ! you are indeed the *substance* of what I was—and *I*, only, as it were, the shadow.”

Again Vaga anxiously regarded her

protector; and again her inquiring glance met his sight.

Angelo breathed quick and strong: a sensation of tenderness melted his heart; and he burst into a flood of tears.

Vaga felt her head turn round, and, pressing his hand closer to her heart, tremulously added, "Angelo! why do you weep?"

"For you, for myself, for the whole of suffering humanity," said he.—"Ah!" directing a piercing glance of the eye to Vaga, "these powerful feelings endanger the disguise which my better wisdom has for the present assumed.—However, the hour fast approaches, when it shall be cast off, and when I shall gladly acknowledge you as I ought." At this pause, a moon-beam fell athwart the countenance of the speaker; and his eyes,

full of tender sweetness, were still bent on Vaga. As she anxiously contemplated their expression, she, by a reciprocal something, felt the reaction of his feelings at her heart.

Vaga thought—Vaga felt—Vaga looked, as he did: and, guided by an innate uncontrollable sentiment, she knelt by his side.

“ If there be truth in the page of nature,” cried she, folding her hands in a supplicating manner—“ I read in your face, Angelo, that I am your child.”

He caught her to his heart, but spoke not: and, lifting up his eyes devoutly, the enthusiasm, so natural to his temper, being revived by the sweet affections, all the spirit of the father shone out in their expression.

Vaga trembled with joy, with love, with transport: for, though silent, his

looks made certain the wishes of her heart; and, as memory recalled the affecting circumstance of their meeting, a mild rapture glowed in her soul.—She kissed his hands—kissed them again—and, bursting into a new transport of delight, exclaimed, “I am no longer an imaginary creature—no longer a link broken from the chain of creation.—Oh!” clinging round his knees, “ ’tis sweet to belong to somebody, and sweeter still to have *such* a parent to love, to honor!—Yes, my father!” (and Vaga leaned her head upon his breast) “our happiest state here is being *loved*, and *loving*.—The tender affections were given to us, as a solace for our cares:—banish them from the earth, and the solitude of the desert were preferable to the impassioned globe; for man is refreshment to man—like the blaze of the sun,

tempered by the aromatic gale, wafting health and freshness through the air."

Angelo listened attentively, until, at the last pause, losing his command over himself, a burst of tenderness broke from his heart.

" 'Tis in vain," cried he aloud, " to struggle against nature ! Vaga ! I surrender to you the certainty of knowing that I am your father : and yet, strange as it must appear, I could wish the secret confined, a little longer, to my own breast. However, the cause of so much mystery shall be explained."—He now proceeded to state, that he had been actuated by feelings and motives perhaps the most imperious, to throw the veil of silence over her natural claims upon him—satisfied, for the present, if his conduct truly spoke the language

of nature and affection: but, the disclosure now made, he gave his promise that he would, on the morrow, without reserve, unfold his eventful story.—

“Yes,” said he, “poor, injured child! I will not, cannot, any longer conceal from you the interesting truth.—You shall hear the sad destiny of your father; and a tale of horror it is; for his history is a scene of woes, a life of wrongs!”—He shuddered, and, passing his hand over his eye-brows, in order to hide the drops trickling from their lids—while tears rolled down his cheeks—heaving a deep sigh, he reclined his head on the shoulder of Vaga, in a manner that told more of sorrow, than the tongue could have uttered in hours.—Then, roused again from thoughtfulness, as if by some sudden idea—beckoning his

\*daughter forward, he rushed out of the abbey, and, striking into the path that led to the cottage, hastily walked on.

Vaga, hitherto engrossed as we have seen, had forgotten to prepare her father for the appearance of the stranger; and, aware of this omission, she immediately pursued him: but, impeded in her haste by the obscured and uneven ground, and being left at some distance behind, she called to him to stop. He seemed, however, to be musing over the past—and, unwilling to have his reflexions interrupted, still hurried on.

A nearer interest now occupied our Vaga's thoughts; and, in a retrospection of the chapel scene, she beguiled the way home. The more she reflected, the more she was amazed.—Her father's remarkable words—“*a scene of woes, a life of wrongs*”—recurred with increased

force to memory ; and her heart again felt a pang as painful, as at the instant when she first heard the affecting, but mysterious truth.—“ What mystery in my father’s words and conduct ! ” said she. “ ’Tis plain that he sought me out, knowing me for his child :—and now, the secret revealed, with avowed reluctance he acknowledges me.—Whence this deviation from the open path of sincerity ? In the fair and unmasked countenance of virtue, candor and ingenuousness are legibly written :—a good heart is like a transparency : any that looks may read what passes within it.—’Tis only the crafty and dastardly spirit, that shrinks from showing itself free and open ; whereas a generous boldness of character betokens the intrepid aspect of truth, fearless of every thing but a departure from sincerity, and seeking no disguise,

because having nought to hide.—Yet,” (starting) “ how is it, that, upon bare surmise, I dare charge my father with aught—knowing that man is, more or less, the slave of circumstances, and that *caution*, even *distrust*, is sometimes necessary to his well-being, peace, and comfort in the world?—How often has he repeated, for my instruction, that vigilant prudence is a guard against the impostures to which an honest heart is ever open—that it is wisdom’s best strength—that its foresight is prolonged existence to integrity—and virtue can never be said to live secure without it!”—These reflexions at length superseded by the remembrance that she was no longer anonymous to herself—that she had folded to her heart the author of her existence—and that, in the course of a few hours, the voice of nature would throw a

further light upon her destiny—a thousand new-born sensations rose in her mind ; and, on reaching the cottage, she felt her heart bound with expectation, and flutter with emotions it never knew before.—Passing instantly to the parlour, and there joining her father, she would have spoken : but, his attitude arresting her attention, timorous she paused.

The traveller was still sleeping soundly, and Angelo's countenance fixed upon him with steady gaze.—The habitual expression of melancholy in his features had given place to a convulsive wildness—his hands were clenched—his eye-balls almost bursting from their sockets—a deep flush overspread his face—and his person was shrunk and distorted. He muttered some words wholly unintelligible : then, perceiving Vaga, point-

ing to the stranger, he said, in a voice half-stifled by emotion—" Girl! you already know that I am your father: —but you are still to be told, that it was your mother who broke my heart."

From a mixed impulse of tenderness and terror, Vaga sinking down at his feet, her arms entwined his knees.— Gazing silently upon her for about a minute, he whispered emphatically, " Yes! yes! you are the living image (excepting only the difference of complexion) of what she was, when pure as the resemblance of her beauties:— and now (heart-rending idea !) the likeness itself is, as it were, the blushing evidence of her shame, and my dis-honor—but not (oh! happy thought !) 'twas not till after your birth, poor child! that she who bore you".... Here striking his forehead with terrific violence, he ran wildly out.

Vaga's warm blood chilled—an electric spark shot through her brain—the shock penetrated from the head to the heart—and, her powers all giving way, she fell prostrate on the floor: but, in a moment more, one passion succeeded by another, she rose up, and followed her father.

He was walking with rapid steps, backwards and forwards, before the cottage door.—Vaga sprung into his arms, and, burying her tears and blushes in his bosom, plainly bespoke all that her heart could say.—Breaking from her embrace, he started—and, in an impatient and impetuous manner, questioned her concerning the stranger.

“ Do you know whom you have harboured?” said he.

Vaga, terrified and trembling, hesitated in her reply.

“ Do you know whom you have

harboured?" repeated he again; and, this spoken with a degree of passion, Vaga could no longer contend against the displeasure of her father; and, blaming herself for the precipitancy of that step which had provoked it, she burst into tears.

Angelo shook and trembled.—Ere she could speak, he emphatically exclaimed, "Vaga! I must not be kept in suspense—Tell me, I beseech you, and tell me truly, do you know whom you have harboured?"

"A traveller, sir."

"Well! but what else?"

"He lost his way; and I met him by chance."

"So! so! so!—and now the manner of your meeting: for this matter regards me nearly."

He accosted me, sir; and naming with veneration the benefactor who

first raised me, gratitude induced me to listen to his discourse."

"Indeed!" said Angelo, struggling against the sickish faintness that came over him.

"Yes, sir," replied Vaga,—all the ardor of her character reviving, as recollection retraced the scene.—"Then, styling himself a savage," cried she, "he talked of nature and religion; and such was the greatness and sublimity of his fancy, every word that fell from his lips breathed *mercy, toleration, and humanity*.—Yet" (increasing in warmth) "this is not all; for what contributed to render him still more interesting to me—he announced himself the bearer of a treasure, designed for Rory the Brave, as a tribute of affection from Tartane, his banished son."

The countenance of Angelo illu-

mined by the moon, a powerful conflict of the feelings was visible in his face—he laughed convulsively.

“ Ah, sir !” said Vaga, “ resist, in the cause of sorrow, your doubting humour :—a solitary wanderer appeals to your best feelings: the traveller is ”.....

“ A cheat !” interposed he furiously.

“ Father ! I vouch it, truth is in that man.”

“ Vaga ! I’ll not give you back the lie—but rather, in gentleness to you, say with school-men, by man, woman is understood.”—He paused a moment :—a dreadful meaning was in his looks —then, pale and shuddering, he closed his eyes, as if to shut out from his sight something horrible.\*\*\*\*\* The repose of the hour seemed to mock the tumult in his breast :—he started, and, stamping the ground with his

feet, vehemently cried out, “ Go, go, my child! and start the game:—bid the traveller repair for shelter to some more hospitable dwelling; and, as you speak the words, look a double meaning:—my commands are on you:—away! away!”—Reeling forward a few paces, he darted along, and taking his station at some distance, stood still, watching for the stranger, and in a few minutes saw him depart.

Vaga now approached:—tears dimmed the lustre of her eyes.—“ The stranger I turned from your door,” said she, “ now bends his steps along the common.—Ah!” (passing her handkerchief across her eyes) “ had you seen the farewell glance he turned upon me—then, modest blushing, and tendering his thanks, thus reproached my rudeness.—Had he reviled me, he had been kinder.”

Angelo was for a moment silent; but making an effort to speak, a groan escaped him—then, turning briskly round, and pointing his fore finger in the direction the stranger had taken, pronounced in broken sentences ——  
“ See, see the mimic mocker!.... How cautious the truant treads, scared by an accusing conscience!.... Now the unreal stops—again moves on—and starts—and staggers—Ha! and even blubbers it.... Yes! yes!” (striking his hands together) “ my passions whetted, pant for more—I’ll drink the tears that flow.”.... A sudden resolution worked his agitation up to a climax :—he seised his daughter’s hand; and, holding her at arm’s-length, “ Vaga!” said he, “ arrest yon driveller; and, with smooth language, once more allure him to the cottage.—Expatiate on the austerity of a man

whom the world has spited: conjure up ideal images of danger; and fasten fear upon him. The woman trembling in his heart, will absolve the offence that stung its pride; and the dastard, rendered passive by despair, shall swallow the worst of deaths, rude insult! . . . Fly! fly! I say; and be the awful instrument of a father's just resentments."

Vaga, overwhelmed, for an instant, by the conviction of a dreadful something, without returning any reply, sunk upon her knees.—Angelo, ghastly and shivering, held out his hand to raise her, which she receiving, with an expression full of tenderness and grief, bowed down her head over it—then looking devoutly up, as if in prayer, softly articulated—

“ If this unhappy traveller has committed some dire trespass on you

(for sure he has), forgiveness well becomes the injured—It is a godlike attribute.”

Angelo was affected: tears gushed to his eyes. A faint smile beamed through the cloud of his sorrow; and he sighed forth—

“ O nature, heaven, and earth, hear the instinctive prayer!”—He smote his breast, and, for a few seconds, seemed lost in *réverie*:—but his agitation returning—regarding Vàga with a look of piercing anguish, he said, in a voice almost suffocated by the violence of his emotions, “ Yes! 'tis graceful in you to mitigate offence; for angels are always eloquent in the cause of mercy.—Yet” (and he clasped his hands) “ did you dream for whom you plead”.... He stopped, while irresolute how to proceed, then, checking himself, exclaimed, “ Silence, bab-

bling heart! tell-tale, be still!.... Dear child! a little while, and you shall know all.—Meantime, you will not hesitate to obey me."

" You will not harm him, sir?"

" Vaga! the brave are never cruel. 'Tis the law of war to hold sacred a captive enemy; and it is the statute of hospitality to protect even a foe!— Yet, believe it, my hatred is of itself sufficient to defend this person. No! I shall not trust my speech, lest a saucy tongue should rail—but, mute as a statue, personify the stony attitude of grief—and, silent as thought, make my observation, while you, instructed by me, shall interrogate the stranger, and search his inmost soul."

Vaga had now no alternative:—for a moment she paused in terrified perplexity, till a sense of the duty she owed her father, at length over-ruling

every other consideration, she hurried on in pursuit of the stranger, who, still in view, soon yielded to her persuasion, and they returned together to the cottage.

Angelo was seated at the further end of the room :—his night-cloak was wrapped round him, and his hat slouched, so as nearly to conceal his face.

The traveller, led forward by Vaga, entered timorously, and, uncovering his head, seemed to wait the courtesy of his host.

Angelo continued silent and motionless; and Vaga's heart beat with fearful expectation.—A flash of resentment shot from the stranger's eye—he colored deeper than crimson—and, while hesitating how to act, as he looked towards Vaga with a meaning

more penetrating than reproof—a rising sigh burst from his tortured bosom.

Angelo, startled by the sound, sprang up, and raised his arm.—Vaga's anxiety for the stranger now overcame every regard to herself: she rushed between them.—Angelo recoiled—and, sinking back in his chair, waved his hand to her to retire.

The traveller's features told the nature of his sensations—and Vaga, impatient to relieve his overcharged heart, while struggling to dissemble her own feelings, affectionately taking his hand, led him along—saying, as she conducted him into an inner apartment, that her protector was not always master of himself—that some tender recollections had started up to memory—and that his passions were near his heart.—Then, beseeching him not

to pass a hasty censure on the natural bursting of his grief, entreated him to await, within the cottage until the morning, that welcome and reception from its tenant, which good manners and hospitality required of him.

The stranger smiled mournfully; and, as resentment was a feeling always transitory in his mind, he only remembered what he had heard concerning the melancholy of his host; and freely accepting the apology offered—after sweetly thanking his fair hostess, and bidding her good night—commending her to the care of Heaven, he laid himself down to rest.

On the following morning, the traveller was awaked by a rustling near the bed—he doubted, listened, and hearing some person breathing distinctly—throwing back the curtains,

he discovered Angelo rapidly retreating from the room.—Surprised, and perhaps alarmed, he rose, and, when dressed, was met at the chamber door by Vaga, who came to summon him to breakfast; and, having taken a seat at the table, while partaking of the repast prepared, his host abruptly entered, disguised as before. The stranger's first impulse was to address him: but, a second thought deterring him, with timid sweetness resigning his chair, he walked towards the window:—and the extensive prospect it commanded, revealing to him the sublime charms of nature, as his eye eagerly wandered over the romantic scenery—rapt in high enthusiasm, he “looked through nature, up to nature's God.”

The sun was rising on the valley; and the sullen grey peculiar to the

dawn, sinking down behind the hills—its beams, sportive as fairy elves, shed a golden light.

“ Yes !” thought the traveller—“ the animated scene invites me forth : I will away—inhale the pure breeze fluttering from the mountain—and, sauntering over the grassy bosom of this pastoral vale, mingle with the rude and wild—climb the romantic steep, and, greeting nature and simplicity, reflexion, refined by the noblest parts of philosophy, (the original, and the simple) the powers of thought, so conducted, shall start into the first principle of religion—“ Brotherly love.”— Amid an innocent and a hardy race of people, I will sojourn for a while, and, living among my fellows, aid those that suffer—right the oppressed—and, styling the world my country, cultivate the common good.”

Thus absorbed in musing silence, a thousand tender images crowded to the stranger's mind: and, as his imagination suggested that it was time to depart—struck with a melancholy impression—softening into tears, and looking a long and grateful farewell at Vaga—he was about to take his leave—when, with all the energy that characterised her feelings, she besought him to resolve the fate of Tartane, her late patron's son.

For some moments, the traveller appeared afraid to trust his voice, and answered her only by silence and dejection....but, relaxing from his reserve, he wept over the memory of a man, whose name never failed to affect him, even to agony.

A faint expression of horror was perceptible in Vaga's countenance—she trembled excessively.

“ Say, does he live?” said she, tremulously.

“ Immortal in my heart,” replied the stranger.—“ ’Tis a tale of tears:—I cannot *speak* the tragic sequel.

“ Traveller!” said Vaga, “ silence is the herald of real feeling:—and, in this speechless dialect of yours, there is a power of expression, beyond the force of language.—Tartane, I take it, was *once* your friend?”

“ Tartane was the friend of all mankind.”

“ May I inquire the chance that brought him to your country?”

“ The fortune of war gave him to our people.—We resisted a foreign enemy:—the invaders fought for plunder—we, for our *king*, our *freedom*, and our *homes*.—The god of arms routed the foe; and humanity crowned with a never-fading laurel the patriot vic-

tory!—It was the custom in our province to immolate all prisoners taken in the heat of battle; and the innocent blood of twelve captive youths was adjudged to flow:—but the daughter of our chief repealed by her tears the sanguinary sentence; and hoisting the standard of equity and honor—‘ Perish a petty vengeance! ’ she cried—‘ and perish a thousand times the execrable despot who shall pollute with the blood of the vanquished the record of our nation’s glory! The fervid spark of heroic love, like the torch of Prometheus, gave life to silent nature—Tartane was one of the redeemed; and, when his fair deliverer pronounced him free, love, the grand enslaver, spread his silken toils, and—wily as the serpent whose folds are death—twined a fatal net-work round him.”

During the whole of this recital,

Angelo betrayed strong emotion ; and, when the stranger pronounced the last sentence—aware of its dreadful import, and roused by an idea of irremediable guilt—he rushed forward, and, averting his head, grasped the stranger's arm ; whose eyes involuntarily settling on the strange novelty of such a position, as he surveyed his form, an unusual awe struck to his heart ;—and superstition, with its train of “ thick-coming fancies,” now usurping the dominion of his artless mind—understanding for an instant yielded to those starts of imagination, which sometimes disturb the soundest intellect. But the pleadings of reason leading to an exertion of the senses—the traveller, recovering a decisive air, in a tone of indignant inquiry, said—

“ What ! stern sir ! are you indeed so babyish, that the simple report of a

*vision* raises in your mind some terrible image of the grave?—If so, here, clutch me closer! am I a shadow?—Ha! the bubble 's burst....Now, sir, release me!"

Angelo, furious and agitated, beat the ground with his feet.

The stranger's heart throbbed—his brain burned....." How strange is this man's temper!" thought he,— " dauntless in his daring—yet shrinking from the trespass—and, as it were, *blushing*, without having the grace to be *ashamed*.

" Eccentric! why hang upon me? Why silent, troubled, trembling?—Why avert your eyes, as if you thought *looking* would *kill*?....My temperature is warm; and *superstition* is the child of *enthusiasm*! Are you a man?—I cannot doubt: for, when these doors, last night, were shut against

me, nature struck fire from your flinty heart; and the *holy flame* melted the savage down!....I was succoured—I was protected—young love spread me a bed; and hospitality presented refreshment to my lips!....Now, then, as you are a man, nature, I trust, will do her part again.—Unhand me, sir?" (haughtily expressed) "else the *weakness* of my *sex*, a colossal mass of force, the *woman* acknowledged shall measure her strength with yours—hurl defiance, and abash your manhood."

The stranger paused for breath; and Angelo, uttering a low inarticulate sound, fell upon his face.

Vaga stood appalled...."A *woman*!" re-echoed she, gazing intently at the traveller—"A *woman*!"

"Even so," replied the stranger—"powerful, because defenceless—and in her *weakness* strong.—Yes!" (all

the heart's swelling pride of the speaker now visible in every look) “ 'tis the courtesy of true valour, to drop the dagger at the feet of the unarmed—and the glory of the fair, that brave men own no other conqueror.”

Vaga, lost in wonder, could make no reply; and the traveller's spirits quite exhausted after their late exertion, bending over the prostrate person of Angelo, she softened into tenderness.

Angelo neither wept nor spoke: but reiterated sighs told the intensity of his anguish; and the stranger—awake to the suggestion of every passion, caught at the supposition of having influenced his distress; and, trying to re-assure and comfort him, many times wished for the power to soothe his grief.

“ I should have borne with you,”

said the stranger—" but my temper is hasty. However, as the fault originates in the head, not in the heart, I hope you will pardon me."

Angelo, though silent, in gesture expressed the most impassioned language ; and the traveller, renewing his solicitations, exclaimed—

“ Nay, nay, we should not spurn the contrite heart!—Gentleman! Oh! bear in mind, that the strongest in this world is comparatively weak—and none so perfect, but have something to be forgiven. . . . I am the remnant of a wreck, cast on the naked shore ; and you, it appears, have been stranded: each, then, having much to suffer, let pity melt the frozen bond of grief—give consolation ; and you shall in turn receive.”

Angelo, totally unaffected by all that had been said, was still silent, still

inexorable; and Vaga, struggling between love for him, and pity for the stranger, relapsed into tears.—An instantaneous gratitude touched the traveller's soul—their eyes met—their rays mingled—and the heart of each spoke in their expression.

Vaga's quick perceptions again became too powerful for her reason—She saw, or thought she saw, a vision of the future.... A gust of joy swelled her bosom almost to bursting.—Then, grief contending for pre-eminence, too much enervated to support the conflict—resigning the whole impression, and weeping over the friendly fallacy—the fond presentiment now appeared to her imagination like a fairy dream.

“ Ah!” thought the traveller, heaving sigh for sigh, and shedding tear for tear—“ though that poor stern old man is inflexible, the Christian heart

is not always obdurate; for here is one" (glancing tenderly at Vaga) "melting as charity....Oh! the precious drops of her compassion are refreshing to me, as the verdant spring, in the midst of Syrian sands, is to parched man in the desert!—and yet I must leave her—must resume my wanderings!....Alas! Why this reluctance to go?—Why this regret at parting?—It is, that there is much of nature about me; and, when overloaded, in order to recruit my strength, I sometimes pause.—Here, pride and wounded feeling prevailing, "Farewell" faltered on the stranger's lips.

Vaga felt as if her heart would burst: an idea floated through her mind, which she could scarcely endure to pause upon.—She attempted, but had not the power, to speak.

The traveller, blessing her, moved

towards the door, and there heaving a deep-drawn sigh—after lingering a few minutes, hurried away.

Angelo's senses had suffered a transient suspension ; and now, seeming to recollect himself, he looked anxiously around.

“ She is gone,” said Vaga.

“ Whither?” replied he.

“ Father ! I know not.”

“ And why not know?” said Angelo : “ for she is your mother.”

“ O God ! O God !”—and Vaga darted towards the door.

“ Would you follow her?” demanded Angelo angrily.

“ Yes !—to restore her to you.”

“ What !” said he—“ the reptile that stung me !—No ! no, dear child ! you would not bring shame to your father's heart.—That wanton is” . . .

“ My mother,” cried Vaga aloud.

“Aye,” (and Angelo bounded on his feet) “the curse of me, and mine.—She saved me from death: that was her whim.—She intombed me living: that was her pleasure—She gave you existence: and your days, as well as mine, have crept their tedious round in banishment and sorrow.—But her hour is come; and she shall feel—as we have felt—what it is in a strange land to suffer.—Yes!” (pausing, and trembling) “It must be so—it shall be so!—The thief who plundered me, in turn I’ll plunder. Ha! ha! ha!” (putting on a vizor) “Aye, the thought is excellent, to mask it with a false one—and, in this fantastic trim, burlesque a living character.”

Vaga stood in speechless agony; and—her father in a moment out of sight—gradually sinking on her knees, she covered her face with both her

hands, and in that attitude remained, until Angelo, re-entering distractedly, roused her from the seeming stupefaction in which she was plunged.

“ Bar all the doors,” cried he, dash-ing his mask upon the ground, and showing the purloined treasure.—“ See! see!” (wildly expressed.) “ I bear in either hand my triumph; for my wife, valuing nothing but trash, deemed these baubles only worth the keeping. . . . O Vaga! had you heard her—‘ Robber!’ she cried, ‘ take all, except my life’—then, (true woman) in the same breath, implored me, either to rid her of the last remaining burden, a miserable existence—or restore the means to live.”

The expression of Vaga’s counte-nance changed abruptly from deep woe, to the most decided horror.—She started up, and, riveting her eyes upon

her father, with a wild shriek, exclaimed—

“ You did not kill her?”

“ No,” replied he, lowering his tone; “ for that would be mercy.—She shall linger out a troublesome, wretched being—aye, swallow ashes, and literally drink tears.”—He was for a moment silent, then holding up a purse containing a few guineas, resumed, “ and here is the proof, that she has not now one sixpence left, to pay even for a night’s lodging.”

Vaga, without exactly knowing what she did, uttering a faint cry, snatched the purse, and dropped upon her knees.—Her father’s heart beat so strongly for an instant, that he could not speak; but, alarmed by the eager desperation in his air, and terrified for the consequence of her temerity, in an

"accent of tenderness and sorrow, she begged his forgiveness.

Angelo intuitively felt her meaning; and, after a long and torturing pause of suspense, in a tone faltering with passion, he demanded back the purse.

"Never," she cried.

A terrible resentment flashed in her father's eyes:—"Vaga!" said he, "take care!"

"I will"—and she clasped her hands—"of my mother."

More and more enraged, Angelo reprobated the adulteress.

"No matter," replied Vaga: "I am still her child."

"And mine, madam," said he, his wrath increasing.

The remonstrance was not without its effect:—Vaga caught his hand, and, in the earnestness of supplication,

raised her eyes, as if in silent entreaty —then, as reflexion stole over her mind, prompted by a sense of innocence to justify herself in the opinion of her father——“ Oh ! dear, good Angelo !” said she, “ into whose bosom (nature directing) I crept for shelter—the revered parent, to whom I owe more than a child’s affections—think not so injuriously of your poor girl, as to suppose her either insensible to your excellence, or unmindful of your indisputable claims upon her.—Yes ! yes !” continued she, in the most animated accent of affection—“ to a virtuous, but unhappy father, I owe much ; and that debt is love :—and to a frail, but wretched mother, surely I owe something—and that debt is principle.”

Angelo trembled excessively—“ What means my child ?” said he.

“ To save from spot or stain your sacred character,” replied she. “ No!” (clinging round him) “ it never shall be said, that the good, the kind, the virtuous Angelo . . . Oh! I cannot speak it.”

Her father, now relapsing into all his former violence, wildly pronounced—

“ Vaga! your mother” . . .

“ Must not perish,” interposed she vehemently.

Angelo could no longer oppose her. — “ Be it so,” cried he, trying to command his feelings: but the effort was ineffectual: he covered his face with his handkerchief; and, somewhat relieved by this indulgence, after making several attempts to renew the conversation, at length he said, in a tolerably firm tone—

“ Vaga, my dear! without offend-

ing the delicacy of your sorrow, I may be permitted to mention, that to every species of crime a given measure of punishment is prescribed; and in this regulation consists the perfection of all law—because it has in view the preservation of society.—I am, then, of necessity a rigorous judge; but the law of right shall hold the balance even.—The three first years of your life were nurtured in your mother's bosom—while I, entrapped by the foulest treachery, languished in a dungeon.—I will not pain you with the detail of my sufferings;—suffice it to say, that a faithful slave, to whom, when I was happy, I had been kind, sought and found me, apparently at the point of death.—To my aged father (oh! affecting legacy!) I bequeathed you, my child;

and on the word of faith this trusty savage swore to fulfill my last command; and his blood has attested his fidelity.—Thus far,” continued he, “I have instructed you in the past: and now may Heaven direct the future!—In a word, either leave your mother to her fate, or relinquish me for-ever.”

Vaga drew a deep sigh, and, bowing to his decision, as to that from which there is no appeal—“O God! O God!” cried she, “must I forego the parent I most love?”

“No, my child: you are free to choose.”

“Then, if so,” said she, “you are the chosen of my heart—only this grant me: to see her for five minutes, is all I ask.”

“Not one, by heavens.”

“A moment, then—a single mo-

ment—just time to say—‘Here, mother, I have brought you back your purse.’

“Trifler! go to! go to!” said he. “Once clasped to her contaminated bosom, to mine you never again return.”—Vaga’s convulsive sobs interrupted his words; but, summoning all her fortitude to bear her through this scene of trial—

“Oh! my father!” cried she, “I *must* leave you; and, under the present circumstances, I know—or at least I *think*—it is for ever.—Pity your poor child; and let your parting blessing sweeten the bitterest hour of her life.”

The force of feeling with which this address was pronounced, was almost too much for Vaga’s heart:—she rested her head against her father’s knees; and a sigh, now and then ut-

tered, was all that proved she had not fainted.

A sensation, caused by love and despair, held Angelo for some time silent: but pride at length triumphed over affection; and, repressing his grief, he proceeded to support the contest with his daughter. But, as reflexion tempered his thoughts—melted by the apprehension of her future suffering, connected with the idea of a separation so sudden from a being whom he was accustomed to regard as the consolation of his remaining days, and now this dear companion lost to him, perhaps for-ever—as these ideas rushed on his mind, though he had resigned himself to the event—a second conquest over his grief was unattainable—he wept like a child,—and, placing his right hand on his daughter's head, blessed her—then, raising his eyes

to heaven, and blessing her a second time, ejaculated, “ And now, Vaga, the prayer of my heart be with you :—may you live *happier* than your father —*better* than your mother !”

Vaga could only answer with her tears; and Angelo, regaining his voice, resumed—

“ As your mother has lived, so let her die, in ignorance.—She must not know me for her plunderer, nor you for the child of her bosom!—No! no!” (raising his tone impressively) “ I beg—I enjoin you to silence; and, as you preserve inviolate your duty to me, may God protect and prosper you !”

Vaga’s spirits were gone:—she rose from her knees, but could neither speak, nor force herself from the spot;—and her father, afraid to trust to his fortitude much longer, tremulously added—

“ Child ! if you are determined to quit me, why linger about it ? go, at once.”

“ I cannot,” said Vaga, “ while you look upon me.”

Angelo, again overpowered, weeping—turned his face aside ; and Vaga, now moving towards the door, self-exiled from her only home, went out into the world, a wanderer.

## CHAPTER 2.

RORY O'MORE, entitled the Brave, (a distinction of honor, by the general consent of his countrymen, conferred upon him, in grateful testimonial of their high sense of his character, uniformly marked for intrepid courage—tender humanity—and the most unblemished honor) was the last male branch of an ancient and respectable Irish family. He was, in every sense of the word, an independent man. His fortune was ample—his mind well stored with useful knowledge—and his disposition liberal. In the connu-

bial state, he enjoyed all the felicity of which it is susceptible, until he had the misfortune to lose the fair partner of his bliss.—She had brought him two sons, and died in giving birth to a daughter, who survived her deceased parent only a few hours.

Mr. O'More displayed, on this occasion, what may be termed a romantic instance of conjugal affection: faithful to the memory of the woman he loved—though literally desolated by her loss, he retained a remembrance of her worth.—So true it is, that a virtuous attachment is, in its essence, *immortal*.—To the education and future reputation of his children this gentleman devoted the whole of his attention and leisure; and the exertions of this able paternal tutor accomplished the great object of rendering, at least, one

of his sons perfect in all things requisite to preserve the hereditary lustre of his name, and form a brilliant ornament to his country. Tartane Angelo O'More, the eldest son, from his earliest infancy, disclosed the blossoms of future greatness; and those shoots of intellectual promise, fostered by the sage wisdom of the philosophic father, in attaining maturity, unfolded both bloom and vigor. The subject of this sketch is a real life picture: fame has already celebrated the hero—I only attempt the delineation of the man;—and, while the virtues and abilities, that adorned his character, shall throw him out on the canvass—the shade, cast by his misfortunes, in the background, will give effect to the lights in the piece.

Ireland, at the time when Tartane was born, was in the state of her pro-

bation—a suffering and dependent province to the sister country ; her legislature and courts of justice subordinate to those of England ;—British monopoly, and British competition—the former excluding foreign commerce, the latter crushing the industry of her people ;—the penal statutes in force ;—in fine, the most general and unqualified wretchedness covered the face of the country. A generous pity planted the seeds of that sublime affection, called *love of country*, in the young Tartane's mind ; and a classical education confirmed it. It was about this period that the struggles of America for independence awakened Ireland from her death-like slumber :—and, *patriotism* seconded by the loud assent of a whole people, the Volunteer associations speedily exhibited eighty thousand men in arms, asserting their

rights, and determined to wrest them from the gripe of British usurpation. Mr. Grattan, the inspired advocate and deliverer of his country, in the exercise of his energies on the great national subject, imparted a portion of the divine spirit that animated him; and the holy flame warmed into new being the nation.—The immortal Flood, and others—not unlike the phoenix—sprang from Ireland's funeral pile, and, uniting their powers with that of their great colleague, achieved her redemption.

The subject of this memoir, no less disposed to promote the best interests of his native land, panted to enroll his name with the heroes of his country: but, as a Catholic, alas! like the dove of Noah, when he could find no footing in the senate, he nestled in the bosom of his country, and was nomi-

nated by the public voice a chief of the old volunteer army in Ireland. I shall not pretend to follow minutely this Irish patriot through the glorious course of his public life—which, resembling the passing meteor, has left his country more benighted, than if it ne'er had shone—but rather say of him, what has been said of the English Roscius, “take him all in all; we shall not look upon his like again.”— In the field and in the closet, he appeared, alike, attempting great things, and equal to the accomplishment of all: but—fitted by a powerful genius, exclusively to wield the *feathered sceptre*—as a political writer, he mounted to the *acmè* of fame—the agitated question of his discourse, parliamentary reform, and the Catholic claim to participate in the power of the state. The high tone of his sen-

timents, enforced by gigantic talent, fixed the attention of the legislature, as well as that of the admiring multitude: he was at once loved, and feared—threatened, and courted—applauded, and condemned.—A price was proposed for his ability: but the trusty patriot, spurning the vile bribe (that hellish instrument of corruption) and having the election, relinquished his dear native land, and chose to live in exile, rather than forego the prerogative of a free and independent opinion; and, entering into the Spanish service, in his military capacity, distinguished for his valour and singular judgement, he was immediately appointed to the command of a company in the Irish brigade—and, in a short time after, sent on a hazardous expedition to the Spanish dominions in South America, whence our brave

countryman never returned. It was supposed by some that he had been taken prisoner, and carried up the country: but the received opinion was, that he had fallen in a battle gained by the natives over the Spanish arms. The luminary which spread its light wide around, having shed its last glory—his veteran father lived to witness a perpetual night usurp the place of its illumination in his heart: but a sun-beam, full as bright, soon rose to cheer him. I allude to the singular introduction of Vaga to his favor and protection—as already related by herself.—I am of opinion, that the human mind, in its construction, is analogous to the vegetable system, as elucidated by the genius of “the Botanic Garden,” Doctor Darwin. All the grand operations of nature, whether connected with the human or vegetable

creation, depend upon *stimulus*, *exertion*, and *sensation* (as ably explained by the doctrines of Doctor Brown.) *Instinct* is certainly *natural reason*: and, on a thorough conviction of its unfailing laws, I consider it a power, not only anterior to what is called understanding, but superior to the idea we entertain of rational sense. Reason, I grant it, is an essential and primary rule for individual and general action, in the regular order of the world; but there are sometimes situations and events in life, of so complex a nature, as to puzzle the profoundest human wisdom, and darken a judgment clear-sighted as that of the wisest man. It is then, this faculty of perception distinguishes itself, by a magic process through an extensive line of unperceived ideas:—it is then, the strength of instinct *acts*—while reason,

entangled within the web of the thing by her deduced, not unfrequently exercises thought in vain.—Yes, Nature herself then speaks to the human heart; and again and again I have heard her instructive lesson—and again and again practised, without restraint, the just and wholesome precept.—By her influence I have been led to turn my eyes from outward objects, in on my own mind—by her, taught that most useful branch of knowledge—“to know myself”—by her.... But it would be endless to enumerate the various portions of individual felicity dependent on the operations of this secret power, which, like the flight of genius, rises so high, that it is invisible to the organ of a mortal, and would take thought itself one thousand years to reach it! Such was the perception that regulated the fate of our heroine

—such the cause that preponderated in the scale of her welfare, when her forlorn condition appealed to the humanity of her first friend, and late venerable protector, Rory the Brave. He sheltered the innocence of the creature, because she was destitute:—her hapless state excited his sensibilities; and pity, as it softens and qualifies the temper, prepares the mind for love.—By a sweet illusion, Vaga came fraught with comfort and consolation to the mourning heart of Tartane's father—she revived those hopes that perished with his lamented son—and, in this respect, formed to him a new existence; for, without *hope*, life, deprived of its charm, languishes into inaction, and death! The hope of happiness pursues us from the cradle to the tomb, nor quits us even there.—'Tis the *food* of the *soul*; and, though

this chameleon may not bestow any solid joy, its enchantments impart a fore-taste of bliss unutterable; and the pleasure, arising from anticipation, has been generally found to exceed reality.—Yes, sweet soother! As the glow-worm lends his light to cheer and guide the benighted traveller on his way, you glimmer in our path—though sometimes a delusive meteor, yet always a beneficial light.

Vaga was no sooner seen by the sage Rory, than she became *dear* to him:—and in *feeling*, not the sense of *reason*, the attraction lay!—He did not attempt to contend against the force of nature, which impelled him to rescue from suffering a helpless child: neither did he examine the first principle of an attachment, which, however consistent, he could not thoroughly understand. One reflexion

was sufficient to him:—as truth is palpable, so the charity of the deed was unequivocal. The vision which most flattered and delighted Mr. O'More in the contemplation of Vaga, was an expression in the countenance, strongly resembling his lost son.—He even fancied the harmonious tones of her voice not unlike the sweet intonation of Tartane's organ in his childish days; and, the fond supposition daily gaining ground, many times was he heard to say, while looking tenderly earnest at the little pensioner on his bounty—“ Yes, dear Vaga!—these charming lineaments, this all-bewitching combination—aye! such is nature's passport; and I admit her claim:—and such was my blooming son, on the day when he abjured, not his country, but his country's corruption.—The boast of his race, and the glory

of his native land, he was : and you, my Vaga ! every hour look more and more his counterpart!" The tears of regret and affection would generally accompany these words, which always concluded with a devout prayer, that she might continue to resemble him uniformly in all things, but his misfortunes.

It was Mr. O'More's maxim, that education should be proportionate to the *capacity* of the *pupil*; and in this opinion he was the disciple of that great master of human nature, Rousseau.—The light of nature is *religious knowledge*.—It should be the *beginning* of our inquiries, inasmuch as it must constitute the *end* of them; for, in this sense, holy writ is a pioneer to the soul; and the impediments to happiness being once thrown down by the true knowledge of God—the gates of

paradise are opened before you. Religion, *rightly cultivated*, is the *perfection of education*, because it co-operates to bring about the several ends of divine Providence, necessary to the well-being of its creatures—otherwise *dead* parts of Nature, unless *invigorated* by virtue of this great principle, which is, to a noble mind, what sculpture is to marble—for “the figure is in the stone; and the art of the statuary only finds it”—inasmuch, as the Divinity “*is with man, and in him, and every where about him*,” though concealed among the superfluous matter, and rubbish clay:—but there is a help always at hand to bring it to light; and this is, as religion expresses itself, “*charity, and the love of our neighbour*.” To this great and sublime science of the soul, Mr. O'More wisely directed the application of Vaga; and on this

subject, as well as other efforts of human genius, his exertions were crowned with the most desirable success. It has been observed, that the “perception of the female mind is as quick as lightning; by a glance of her eye she shall penetrate, and look into the watch-work of the human heart:—and, examine her on its several parts, how clear her comprehension! how acute her replies!—but ask her how she got there, and she will tell you, that is more than she knows herself.” Such is the wonderful perception of woman, something *more*, though *less* in the aggregate, than the solid judgement of man! Vaga’s sage preceptor, in the course of his instruction, smoothed every difficulty, made the way clear before her—and the mount that terminated her inquiries, though steep,

by the exercise of proper exertion, she climbed in due time to the summit.—To convey information with effect, we should minutely study the passions and consult the dispositions of the pupil, in order, as it were, to become subordinate to the natural system, which, if well understood, prescribes more or less for itself. Nothing so plastic as Nature—nothing so susceptible of improvement, as the human mind!—But then, as throughout the whole order of things, in like manner, intellect has its several classes, and degrees.—Here, one man soars, and wings his flight through all the elements of science:—there, a being of the same species, instead of rising, falls beneath the pressure of some invisible weight.—The features of Nature are not more various than those of the human understanding. The

same means to acquire knowledge are alike open to all capacities: but to industry unaided by sagacity, what has been said of superficial observers, may again be applied—It is like “a looking-glass, which receives the images of all things, but retains none.”—By the same argument, we shall find, that the *sun* shines on the dung-hill, as well as on a bed of roses: but then, let it be demanded, whether its properties are as beneficial to the one, as to the other?—It is in vain to expect that a fine and delicate plant can take root, and flourish, on a barren rock. Education may correct and govern the temper and manners—may check and restrain wayward inclination: but I maintain, it cannot *make* a *mind*!—No! that is the exclusive work of the living God, who condescends to style himself our father,

and who, as a father, has communicated to his children every essential precept towards the attainment of happiness here, and in a future state! To this end, the Scriptures need only be consulted, as they contain directions for the rule of life, adapted to every understanding, however limited—however enlightened. The precepts spoken by the Redeemer of mankind, how plain and easy to be understood!—The learned are charmed by their purity, strength, and spirit—and the most ignorant taught, and delighted by the fairest features of composition, a beautiful *simplicity*—or, in other words, *the moral sublime*!—It were endless to pursue this subject through all its ramifications, admitting the slow growth of my reason competent to the task: yet I must not dismiss it, without at least re-tracing its laws

(intelligible to the meanest capacity) in the earnest desire to conform myself to them, which signify, “to love *mercy*, to practise *justice*, and to live in *peace* with all men.”—Reader! this is the receipt to *make* the *mind*, to reclaim the heart, and to produce the first best fruits of our nature—innocence, and grateful love—each in itself a perpetual source to the increase of our true happiness and honor. Having thus far endeavoured to prove that religious knowledge is the most essential study of the human mind, and superior to every other, as the only sure foundation of virtue, and that its positions are so concise and simple, the acquirement of it is so easy, that it strikes like inspiration—my next effort shall be to illustrate its efficacy.

It was an early exhortation to religion, that gave the bias to our Vaga's

mind, upon which her character finally fixed, as the basis of its high and unbending tone.—While yet a child, she understood religion, as a child:—and, when advanced to her fifteenth year, what she had been accustomed to regard as a duty, became an object of delight. That she was excellent, was the work of the Divinity; and that she had arrived to the highest degree of human perfection, was the work of religion.—She excelled in all things, but most in this!—It was religion that formed for her mind a coat of *mail*, impenetrable to every assault of the common enemy, at war with virtue!—It was religion that exalted her understanding, and threw out the most beautiful parts of it, where the light of genius would fall, and show them to most advantage.

Vaga's childhood passed unclouded.

She was literally the soul of sensibility—sprung from love—and warmed into life by kindness; nor ever did she know a sorrow, until the bright beam of her joy set on the tomb of the friend who cherished her in her infancy:—and, for every favor past, the tear of gratitude yet glistens in her eye—balming the remembrance inurned in her heart. This blessed patron lost—how changed the scene! No longer the distinguished favorite—see her, neglected, and forlorn—shunned for her misfortunes, by the heartless, and on the false charge of affectation, (how shall I write it down?) a *mark*, for knaves and fools to shoot at. But, then, reader, let it be understood, “the shaft flies harmless, when it is undeserved.” A patient sufferer she was; and, though affliction poured in upon her, she never told her grief,

because, to the marble-hearted she could not look for pity—and, though her gentleness might tame the fiercest beast, when demons animate human bodies, the odds are against nature! . . . . Poor Vaga! What! would not one spare you? one give the game, at least, fair play? No! false friends hemmed her in; and, when by stratagem netted—contrary to every law, a fell pack plundered the prey, yet living, of all her *golden* plumage—ay, plucked out every feather, and stripped her to the bone!—But, the mercy of God—of him who “tempers the wind to the shorn lamb”—in the hour of Vaga’s extremity, sent, to her deliverance, a friend—a father!—The heart where benevolence fixed her temple, was the paternal home of the wanderer—and, might

affection unbar the gates, would open for her reception the portals of the world.

The following digression will make plain those points in Vaga's history, which may at present appear obscure. It will be observed, that no other mention has yet been made of the late Mr. O'More's youngest son, than the bare announcement of his name. But, as this gentleman is material to the history, we must not any longer suffer his character to lie in shade.

Owen O'More, from the moment he drew his first breath, was what we call an “ill-favored” plant. He was turbulent and tyrannical from his infancy: he was impatient of reproof, and hostile to command; and, in common with all common boys, he loved mischief, for *mischief's sake*. No effort could bend his mind to take instruc-

tion. To coercion he was hardened ; and, to punishment or reward, he was alike insensible :—a dunce in grain, he hated any thing and every thing in the form of letters ; and such lessons, as the persevering application of his father had forced into his head, he gabbed over like a parrot, without the smallest idea of what they meant. However, his capacity lay another way.—Dull only where *mind* was concerned, none could be more expert at invention :—he could give the lie to truth, without blushing—contradict his own evidence, without stammering—and, then, either shift or twist himself out of the petty perjury, with incredible ingenuity :—and, for torturing animals, insects, &c. his aptitude was no less keen.—The mischievous rat, or the sweetest bird of the spring, whose morning lay pours forth the

note of love—the stinging insect, or the domestic cat, (that most *useful*, but calumniated and persecuted animal) the variegated butterfly, the playful kitten, the unweaned lamb, the kid just dropped—all, all, if unfortunately at his mercy, equally felt the *coward* lash, and the rage of *power*. To a disposition thus prone to evil, we may reasonably conclude, excellence was odious. His brother's acknowledged merit he considered as a reproof to him;—and what he could never love, he learned in time to hate.—Fondly devoted to his pleasures, sensual gratification was the darling passion of his heart—and the love of sway, the master feeling of his nature. Great he could never be—powerful he might be—and to this end, when by grant of parliament Catholics were permitted to study and practise the law, he ob-

tained a degree at Trinity College—was entered a student at Lincoln's Inn, and, after serving his terms, (or, more properly speaking, shuffling through his probationary course) he was called to the Irish bar. The next step to this gentleman's preferment was a *wife with a fortune*; but here his unbridled desires played him a trick: Delighting in the pleasures of the table, a *good dish* was his constant look out—and, in order effectually to secure it, he literally married his cook-maid. It will be remarked, that Mr. Owen O'More had hitherto attended the Four-courts, without deriving from his legal abilities what would pay for the powder in his wig. Yet, “*ways and means*” may replenish an empty bag:—but, for an empty head—the whole exchequer, were it expended, could not furnish it. The

learned gentleman, not too nice to stick at the mere pursuits of a lawyer—and sagacious enough to know that there was another road to eminence, besides the prescribed forms of pleading—set all his wits to work to make a *name*—assured that emolument would come of course; and striking into a well-known “*beaten path*,” commenced *pamphleteer*—fathered essays vended by indigent genius—manufactured speeches, with the aid of many *heads*—and was heard in every public meeting, *thundering* forth the rights of the people, or, as some wags would have it, “*barking for place!*” Certain it is, the caricature of “the dog in office” was shortly after exhibited in the print-shops; and Mr. O'More hence-forward figured in a new character.—He became what is called a *hack*; and a better going hireling was not in

the service. The hero *mounts* the throne of fame, and the malefactor *ascends* the ladder to disgrace. Mr. O'More was also rising!!! A fine house in town, a villa in the country—a swarm of pampered lackeys in his hall, a stud royal in his stable—carriages, to drive down the vulgar—feasts for the *rich*—kicks for the *poor*—cards, balls, and concerts—plays, masquerades, 'drawing-room *conversazioni*, and 'drawing-room company—the former, compliment, mock-modesty, scandal, and intrigue—the latter, all the *little* great—wives in requisition—married men in demand—“maids, as they are”—bachelors, and their widows and children—*Honorable* gentlemen, and the purveyors of their pleasures—led captains on their legs, and generals on the staff—bloods, half dead—belles, half alive—bullies, bra,

voes, boasters, and moderns of every denomination! In short, Mr. and Mrs. O'More were universally allowed, by the Dublin fashionables, to do the thing in good style.—This thrifty, but learned gentleman in the law (if we will take his own word for it) was beginning to get forward in his profession *fairly* enough; and now that the fate of Tartane, his elder brother, had become doubtful, hope began to buzz something about “golden fleece,” in his ear.—Earthly happiness, however, must have some draw-back; and Vaga was indeed the only alloy to the triumph of his heart. In vain he expostulated with his father, on the ridiculous folly of charging himself with the care of a creature, whom no one knew—in vain represented to the old man, that he had no *right* to indulge his caprice by the adoption of any incum-

brance inimical to the interest of his heir. But his oratory on this subject proved ineffectual: the old man was assured that he could justify himself to himself—that his meaning was good—and, admitting that he erred in judgment, (which he begged leave to doubt) he peremptorily refused to repair the trespass by any act hostile to humanity. Every wise man has always, in case of defeat, some mental reservation.—Mr. O'More was wonderfully alert at *facing* whichsoever way his *interest* lay: and, as matters now stood, he conceived the Italian maxim, “thoughts close, looks loose,” his best policy; and accordingly, suppressing his resentments, he afterward so conducted himself to the little stranger, as to impress upon his father, that he had at last learned *charity* of him.

It was Vaga's misfortune to lose her benefactor by sudden death. He had enjoyed sound health to the day that terminated his existence; for wisdom and virtue had been the companions of his life; and, in old age, he still preserved that perpetual bloom with which they reward their votaries.

Vaga made no parade either of her love or her grief; but, mourning in the nerve most tender, literally washed with her tears the grave of her benefactor. The extent of her loss, however, she had yet to learn. That a provision adequate to her future independence would be found in her patron's *will*, she never once doubted —he having communicated to her his pleasure in this instance, and even proceeded so far, as to specify the sum—ample indeed. But, when,

on the demise of Mr. O'More, the heir apparent arrived, the *cloven* foot, now casting every disguise, bared itself to the view.—“A *will!*” said he—“a tenant for life make a will!—and for whom? for a beggar!—No! no! his sins, in that way, were carried far enough during his life-time: but the devil himself could not work upon him to drag his crimes beyond the grave.—’Twas blasphemy even to think it:—and for the insolent who dared to say it, she only verified the old proverb, ‘set a beggar on horse-back, and he’ll ride to the devil.’ But pride always got a fall.” Then, “idle-ness was the root of all evil”—“the poor must work for their bread”—and “beggars must not be choosers.” These, and many more quaint sayings, were repeated by the Counsellor, for the edification of his hearers, mak-

ing it a rule, whensoever his own brains failed him, always to have recourse to those of others. His next care was to examine, *without witnesses*, all his father's papers, and to destroy such documents as might threaten in any manner to turn out to his disadvantage; which being accomplished, without the smallest ceremony, he demanded—or, in other words, *commanded* Vaga to deliver up her keys, and, proceeding to make what he called a legal *search*—claimed, and actually appropriated to his own private use, every article of value, that had been given to her by her benefactor, not excepting her wardrobe—very deliberately remarking, that she must now fashion her dress to her circumstances. It was at this memorable juncture that Angelo appeared; and we are already acquainted with the

result of his visit.—Having made a retrograde movement, as relating to the present memoir, the next chapter shall carry my readers forward, in pursuit of the wanderer, Vaga, whom we shall overtake some eighty miles distant from her father's cottage—lodged in a two-pair room, in an obscure street in Dublin, and employed in pious attendance on the sick bed of a wretched—too wretched mother.

## CHAPTER 3.

“ **C**HEER! cheer!” said Vaga—“ Fear not! you will soon be well—and”.... she would have added “ happy:” but a secret sense within her arrested the word.

The sufferer fixed her hand to her heart; and tears rolled down her cheeks.

“ Chili, are you in pain?” inquired Vaga tenderly.

“ Yes, Vaga:—I feel for *you*.”

“ Why for me?” asked Vaga.

“ Because,” replied the sufferer, “ in return for the comfort you bring me,

I give you nothing but trouble and sorrow."

Vaga could make no answer.

"Why did you leave your kind protector, to follow a forlorn?"

"The action did not depend on my will," said Vaga. "'Twas an impulse that I could not resist; and my heart approves, and rejoices in it."

"And will you continue to stay by me?"

"So long," said Vaga, "as you are in need."

"This is heavenly love, and charity," softly whispered the invalid—"Yes! such love, as Heaven bears to its creatures—such love as Angelo has shown to Vaga—such love as Vaga cherishes for such a friend."

"I could not love any one as I love Angelo," said Vaga—"because I can esteem no other so much."

“ And will you not return to him?”

“ Yes, when I have done my duty to you in your distress.”

“ Think, Vaga, when the purse is run out”....

“ God will replenish it,” said Vaga, interrupting the speaker.—“ We will put our trust in him; and he never yet failed any that had confidence in his mercy.”

The foregoing dialogue illustrates the devout obedience instanced by Vaga to the will of her father. Whatever struggles it might cost her to surmount her own feelings in the preservation of the secret, a due regard to him, who exacted the self-sacrifice, enabled her religiously to fulfill it; for, though, in the softness of her nature, prone to yield, yet, whenever duty dictated, she rigorously con-

formed herself to its laws, though in opposition to the most seductive pleadings of the heart.

I shall pass over the succeeding interval, as it admits only of repetition, and take up the narrative at rather a pressing juncture in our heroine's life, viz. the want of money. To her father she dared scarcely look for succour: but, independent of his supposed resentment, she had learned, that, on her departure from him, he instantly quitted the cottage; and no one could tell whither he had betaken himself. Her mind, however, had been in some degree prepared for the present exigence; and, anxious to avert the visitation of calamity from an unhappy parent still suffering under a nervous complication—and having either heard, or read, of the immense sums paid to female

authors, in the present day, for even indifferent works, she determined to make a trial of her literary abilities; and making choice of a subject, often touched, but never to be exhausted, she produced the following sketch, entitled, “a late Visit to the Lake of Killarney\*,” the enchantments of which first inspired her muse, when, in her twelfth year, she accompanied her deceased patron, to view that scene of beauty—the boast of Ireland, and ornament of the world !

\* In May, 1810, the author presented this piece to the Hibernian Magazine, published by the Hibernia Press Company, which was honored with immediate insertion.—See the No. for that month.

*Description of a late Visit to the Lake  
of Killarney.*

VAGA and her protector set off from Cork, mounted on a pair of smart docked ponies.—They came under the denomination of flying travellers; and the rapidity of their progression precluded all observation; which, no doubt, is a loss to the curious, as the high road from Cork to Macromp furnishes subject worthy their knowledge. Their expedition attained only the one interesting point: it hastened the moment of embracing a friend, and shortened the impatient solicitude of her affectionate heart for their arrival.—Her hospitable board bade them welcome; and the benign countenance of

their hostess gave the highest flavour to the rich viands.—They spent the evening in that easy confidence, which real friendship only knows; and the next day Vaga commenced her journal, as follows:—

August 24th.—An angry sky, and frequent violent showers; however, as we had appointed to meet our party in \*\*\* , on we must proceed, in defiance of the warring elements. At 12, left Ash Grove behind us, and cantered for ten miles over a rude rocky country, where the hand of cultivation can nowhere be discovered—not a tree to be seen, till we reached Mr. Leader's, a neat-looking house—the front ground improved on a small scale—a meandering river, encircling its verdant banks, catches the attention; and the eye, relieved from the

weary tract of heavy bog and sterile mountains, rests with pleasure upon this smiling scene.

Dined at \*\*\*, and reached Killarney by 8 o'clock.—As there are but two inns in the town, we soon discovered our party. The ensuing morning was appointed for feasting ourselves on the beauties of Killarney, of which we had heard so much. I rose on the 25th, impatient to view the rich scenes my imagination had painted in glowing colors. The moment at length arrives for setting off.—A mile from the town, we take boats at a place called Ross Island, on which is built a barrack, of modern appearance, and also a castle, which does not look so antique as its foundation. A little more ivy would add to its venerable appearance.—At this castle we stepped into our barge—clarionets, and French-

horns playing.—Behold us now on the expansive bosom of the lake—ten miles in length and five in breadth—scattered with islands covered with the most luxuriant verdure, and trees of the richest foliage.—The lake on one side is checked in its extent by mountains, which, rising abruptly to a perpendicular height, form a thousand fantastic shapes, and are lost to the sight, in the clouds.—Trees, as ancient as the soil, rise with majestic grandeur from the borders of the beneficent waters, and ascend to the summit of the hills,

.....“ Where,  
At fall of eve, the fairy people throng,  
In various games and revelry to pass  
‘The summer night, as village stories tell\*.’

We landed at the foot of the grand water-fall, which, from a quantity of

\* Thomson.

rain that had poured from the heavens the night before, swelled the cataract to a prodigious degree.—The dash of water was deafening; and the different breaks formed one of the most sparkling, animated, foaming, beautiful objects I had ever seen, and more particularly so, when contrasted with the deep, solemn gloom of the surrounding woods, bending gracefully their leafy branches over the roaring torrent, and then raising their bold heads, as if attending the Naiads “to their favorite haunts in the cool fountains.”

—We stood for an hour in one of their recesses, listening to their music, and dazzling our weak sight with the grandeur of the cascade.—Little simple-looking girls, that a sportive fancy might easily mistake for wood nymphs, were every moment popping on us through the thick foliage, and pre-

senting baskets of nuts. Here, where the human hand could in no part be discovered, nor sound of footsteps heard, these sudden apparitions had an indescribable effect!

With slow and reluctant step we returned to our barge—an awful solemnity impressed on our minds, which imperceptibly gave place to livelier sensations, as our pleased attention fixed on the picturesque scenery around the lake, dressed in all the varied, fascinating beauty with which Nature clothes her choicest works.

We had now proceeded to Glen-na, when our eyes with wonder were en-chained;—lost in admiration and mute attention, we gazed!—Every thing we had just been delighted with, seemed but the every-day work of inferior agents—all our ideas of the sublime,

united to the beautiful, were, indeed, but imperfect human ideas!—Here the hand of the great “Architect” was visible; a higher style of the grand could not be borne by the feeble organs of man. If our notions of the Deity permitted us to suppose that Omnipotence ever reposed, Glen-na would be the hallowed retreat.—Inferior angels, I am willing to think, sometimes quit Elysium, and deign to rest in this terrestrial paradise!—We sounded our French-horns:—Echo, in her deep recess, caught the sound, and returned the salutation, in notes so softly dulcet, as melted the soul all to harmony.—We were called off from listening to her melody, by some fishermen who were drawing a net near the Glen.—They caught two of the natives, which we purchased, and left with the inhabitants of a cottage, which peeped from

under the deep-embosomed shades. This smiling, simple retreat is reserved by Lord Kenmare, the noble magician of this enchanted ground, for the convenience of those who visit Killarney. —Under this rural shed we proposed dining; and, whilst our salmon were roasting, we rowed under a high arch, built by Colonel Herbert, as a communication between Muckress and the opposite lands, into the middle lake, and nearly round the loveliest spot under the heavens—"Muckress!" to embellish which, all the elegance of taste, combined with the skill of art, and magic exertions of wonder-working Nature, are united, and so curiously blended, as puzzles the most inquisitive observers, to separate the ingenious labors of man from the wildly luxuriant productions of Nature. All that part of Muckress, which is washed by

the waters of the lake, presents to the eye one continued chain of vast solid rock, out of the impenetrable sides of which grow arbutes, and various evergreens of the richest foliage. You behold with astonishment a foundation of massy rock, fringed, from the very base to the summit, with a thousand different trees; the mountain-ash, now in full berry, bursting their scarlet clusters through the shining deep green of the holly, and the lighter shade of the arbutes, forcing way to the crystal bosom of the lake, and offering their tempting fruit to the Genius of the waters.

Our boat passed a great mis-shapen rock, in the middle of the lake: when we had left it some distance, the boatmen called back our attention to it. It now bore the exact figure of a gigantic horse, in the act of drinking.

Its appearance is very curious; it is called Horse-rock.

The signal for dinner was given; and we obeyed the summons; when, had we been epicures, we should have been feasted on the delicious salmon, which, on the lake, is dressed with great excellence. The fish is quartered, and each quarter spitted on a small wooden stick, the ends stuck into the ground, round a fire that is kindled on the green sod, and in that manner roasted. The windows of our rustic cottage commanded an extensive view of the lake, which presented a scene of tranquil beauty, not to be described. Our music played at intervals, and time passed unheeded away.

The bright orb of day had run his course: his rays were collected in one focus: the rich tinge, shed by his de-

parting beams on the horizon, was reflected on the smooth surface of the waters, over which our barge lightly swam, soft music playing.—The bright gilding of the mountain became fainter and fainter:—the glow imperceptibly faded to the sober grey of night. The ombrageous shade of the majestic forest threw an awful gloom over the contiguous objects, which were slowly disappearing from our sight.—All was silence:—the rowers rested on their oars: Contemplation sat on the helm; when suddenly attention was roused from her deep musing, by a sound from the French-horn, which was answered by Echo, in notes of heavenly sweetness.

The nymph of melody seemed willing to accompany us, from her loved abode Glen-na, to Ross Castle, to which we were approaching. Her melting

voice was thrilling through our enraptured souls.—A glittering meteor suddenly appeared, playing on the undulated waves.—I doubted not but 'twas the nymph herself, charmed from her retreat :—but this was the mistake of the moment. . . . Behold the moon, soft beauteous planet! rising with mild radiance, dispersing the heavy gloom, and shedding a serene light over the woods and waters. Ten thousand stars attended in her train, and strewed her path with sparkling splendor.

We landed under Ross Castle, quitted this scene of enchantment with keen wishes to return, soon as exhausted nature was refreshed.

26th.—The day smiled propitious: we were again on the lower lake, and rowing away to the island of Enniscfallew, which we had not time to visit yesterday. It contains seventeen acres

—a flat island, different from all the others, free from rocks, and the soil too rich to produce tillage; but trees, of prodigious size and luxuriance, are natives of the ground. Except at Muckress, the largest trees grow at Ennisfallew.—Here is an old abbey covered with ivy, in ruins, and run over with nettles and briars.—I made my way through them, but was not compensated for being stung and scratched. Little more than the outside walls remain. This island was (fabled story tells) the abode of the Genius of the Lakes; and he is often seen rising from the deep, crowned with coral and sea-weeds—at that hour when spirits play their gambols, and scare poor simple maids from their prayers.—As I have never seen his saintship, I cannot tell you what form he assumes.

We left these verdant and shady banks, and rowed away to the upper lake.—On our approach to it, we landed at the island of Dinas, that our boat might pass a narrow neck of communication between the two lakes, where the current is so rapid, that the boat is carried by its violence, for the space of forty yards, with the swiftness of an arrow from a bow.

Dinas is a bewitching spot—it is more wildly rural than any thing I had yet seen.—All view of the sublime is here lost: rustic simplicity, but graceful, animated, and alluring, is the leading feature. Banks of the most refreshing verdure invite repose—arbutes, laurel, and holly, promise eternal shade—the blackbird, thrush, linnet, and various other sweet cho-risters, fill the air with the wildest harmony. A million of flowers spring

perpetually under our feet, and enamel the soft carpet with colors of the most delicate tint.—The wildly-spreading branches of the oak repel the bleak winds in their impetuous career, and form an impenetrable barrier against their destructive blasts.—Boreas never enters this tranquil retreat: the gentlest Zephyrs only inhabit here, sport through the groves, and wanton under the fragrant leaves of the rose and eglantine.

On the bleeding bark of an ash-tree I carved my name; and here our party fixed to dine; so I quitted it with less regret, as I was sure of returning once more to this delightful Eden.—Here every object was soothing, cheerful, and interesting; the mind was not elevated to scenes too immense for the human powers to support: Nature was in her loveliest

garb—the robe of simplicity gracefully thrown, and flowing in easy folds.—We resumed our seats in the barge, and entered on the upper lake, a long, narrow sheet of water, (by no means so wide as the lower one) diversified with numberless rocks, raising abruptly their heads out of the prolific lake, crowned with ever-greens. On some of those islands (if solid rocks may be called islands) particular trees are the only natives. One is covered with arbutes, another with holly; on another the mountain ash is predominant. The picturesque scenery on each side, and to the utmost boundary of the horizon, is wild and romantic, beyond the powers of description to paint in just colors. The surrounding Turk and Mongerton tower above all the surrounding mountains: their proud heads rise superb above the

clustering hills, brave the rushing torrent dashing down their sides, and mock the rude north blast of the merciless tempest. Stripped of every verdure except the purple heath, they still ascend boldly, till their majestic heads are completely lost in the expansive heavens. Fancy, in her most extravagant humour, seems to have sketched the landscape. The character of the piece is very different from what strikes the observer at the lower lake:—there the sublime and beautiful are never lost sight of:—here the wildly beautiful profusely scattered, without order or harmony, over hill and dale, meet the wandering eye; and sometimes the beautiful is totally lost. The rudely wild—the bold—the tremendous, and sublime, (particularly under the eagle's nest) is, each step, astonishing the spectator.—Here Na-

ture is not so beneficent a parent, as on the majestic woody hills around the lower lake:—we beheld gigantic mountains extending into a million of fantastic shapes, and from their great height destitute of their most fascinating garb—clothed, towards their summit, only with purple heath; however, the rich vales and glens, profusely wooded, and with cool springs, regale the eye, wearied by too long a gaze on the sublime works of the great Divinity.

We landed on an island towards the extremity of the lake, called Roman's Island.—It contains about two acres, and has its title from a gentleman of that name, who lives near Cork. He is a lover of solitude, and of the sports of the field:—he has taken this little spot, on which he has built a cottage—the object of our at-

traction : but we repented our visit :— beastly man (in the absence of the owner) has rendered it a sty for hogs, though Nature designed it a habitation worthy gods.

The sweet fragrance of Dinas was delicious, and banished from our mind our late disagreeable visit.

27th.—Was a wet day.—However, we went in carriages to a review.

28th.—A glorious day—and spent it in visiting Muckress, and Lord Kenmare's park, which contains 1500 acres. The high ground commands a full view of the lower lake—from one point you can reckon sixteen islands. The spectacle which presents itself from this situation, is magnificent. Through the park runs a deep glen, thickly wooded: a rapid, clear river runs at the foot, over which are constructed, in some places, rustic bridges.

—The taste of the noble lord is conspicuous in a thousand instances, through this scene of wild beauty, vying with Nature, whose luxuriance is sometimes checked by taste and art.

Muckress is surely the garden of  
Eden :—yet the fair Eve, who possess-  
ed it, was tempted to stray from its  
lovely borders \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \* \*

Muckress abbey is a beautiful ruin. Founded in the year 1440, it remains in a great state of preservation, covered with ivy. The ground around and contiguous is an Elysium of all that can captivate the senses. Through the abundant foliage of the rich evergreens, are openings and vistas, which present a view of the lakes—their nameless varied beauties, and the majestic woods which environ them.

Every step portrays a new object more charming than the last, to delight the eye. If silence, shade, and meditation, is your view, retire to the inviting bower, whose thick leaves are impenetrable to all light—where deep musing is softly soothed by the gurgling stream, and sometimes roused from her meditation by the sweet whistle of the blackbird. If weary of retirement and solemn musing, direct your steps to the refreshing lake, which presents a spectacle of all that can interest the mind, animate the spirits, and charm the taste.

Barges, gaily painted, and richly decorated, with bands of music, lightly skim over the glassy surface, present themselves to the spectator, and the next moment are lost by the intervening island, which proudly rises from the waters, decked with trees of the

wildest luxuriance. Through the lively foliage, appear motley groupes of company—some sitting on the verdant banks, others rambling through the shady groves of arbutes, while the soul-inspiring music, always attended by soft echo, charms the ear.

Should the eye wander from this animated scene, it rests perhaps on the superb spectacle that Glen-na offers—where the mind is at once transported to the great Divinity, and lost to all earthly objects, till roused suddenly by the French-horn. With breathless expectation you behold the stag, panting and just exhausted, rush into the lake, pursued by the eager courser and keen hounds.

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This task completed, Vaga's next object was to make sale of it: but,

being an utter stranger in the metropolis, and possessing, moreover, a considerable share of timidity (though an author), she communicated the effort to her landlady, who very graciously permitted the fair scribe to read the production for her, while she took her evening nap ;—and, on awaking from her slumber, she professed herself so much pleased with the piece, that, after repeated solicitations, she took it to a journeyman printer of her acquaintance, who taking it to his employers, a literary under-strapper at length waited on Vaga, to tell her she might call at the office.

With a beating heart, and hopes all elate, early the next day, our young author entered the Temple of the Muses. It was deserted : but piles of publications were ranged so thick, round about, that she had scarcely

room to stand. A small pamphlet, the leaves of which lay open, happening to attract her attention, she read—“The Birth of Friendship;” and the novel, but attractive interesting title, exciting an interest in her mind, she ventured to look into the production, and perused with delight a composition breathing the soul of beauty, taste, delicacy, and refinement!—Yes, Macauley! amiable, as celebrated! your “Birth of Friendship” is a rose in literature, that shall bloom as long as the culture of letters adorns the world.

A man now interrupted the contemplations of Vaga. He came into the office with his hat on, and passing her rather rudely—mounting a writing-desk, and squirting a tint of ink, that struck full in her face, began to write.—“Poets are said to be the sons of the gods,” thought Vaga, looking signifi-

cantly at her companion: “ but I am sure the Graces do not always preside at their birth.”

The literary mark on her cheek was no stain: but, whether it was or was not, it did not give her a second thought, after she had consigned it to her handkerchief.

“ Sir,” said Vaga, now acquiring courage to address the writing gentleman, “ may I beg to know” . . .

“ Young woman,” said the man, “ the printers are all up stairs; and they can answer you: but I am not to be spoken to.”

“ Is the *bairn* damned?” cried a Stentorean voice, issuing from above.

“ Not yet,” said the writing gentleman.

“ Then it will live another day?” roared the other.

“ ‘Tis at its last gasp,” said the writing gentleman.

“ Make haste!” reiterated the thunderer; “ for I see the author coming to cry *peccavi*.”

A gentleman entered: he bowed to Vaga, and, seeing her standing, “ Madam,” said he, “ permit me to place for you a chair.”

“ Ha! Chevalier!” interposed the writing gentleman, rising with much complaisance—“ I congratulate you on your *Vision*.”

“ True,” replied the former speaker, in a foreign accent, and half smiling—“ as you are pleased to say, my *dream is out*.”

“ Well, Chevalier!” resumed the writing gentleman, with a smirk and a simper—“ now that the little bantling has made its way into the world,

may I ask, have you put it on its legs?  
—Have you got for it supporters?"

" The bantling you mean," replied the Chevalier, " has never been born."

" Then," said the writing gentleman, flinging his pen away, and jumping from his present eminence—" you suppressed it in the delivery; for I read the proof."

" Yes, sir, you have said it," replied the Chevalier—" I stifled it in its birth, to save it from such as you. Writers are all fair game; and, when the dogs get the scent—in full cry, they dash in at the death."

" I confess I have no objection to good sport at any time," said the writing gentleman, looking rather chagrined. " However, certain it is, I have lost my labor this morning." So saying, he walked off, *sans cérémonie*.

The Chevalier smiled.—" Madam,"

said he to Vaga, “a gentleman may be a scholar: but you have had a specimen to-day, that a scholar is not always a gentleman. The truth is, Mr. Squib piques himself on his scholastic rust, particularly when ladies are in question—whose unequal force (opposed to ours, we having the vantage ground) he invariably attacks, taking aim at the head—not at the heart. But, in my mind, 'tis high time that he should cease hostilities; for your sex, madam, fight like the Parthians, and conquer, when pursued.”

Vaga smiled.—“That gentleman, then,” said she, “is, as I conceived, a writer.”

“Yes, madam: he is what we call a *made* one.—The press abounds with such—persons who write for price, without regard to aught in the moral

sense—persons, whose art it is to crush truth and its circulators—persons who spatter their gall into the eyes of a staring multitude: and then, to compensate for the loss of light—behold them leading the blind!!!—But for real genius,” (and his kindling eyes fixed on Vaga) “ what says a celebrated French author?

Le Génie est un Dieu tout de gloire et de flamme ;  
L'harmonie est sa voix ; la Nature, son âme,  
L'univers, son empire ....

*Le Brun, Poëme de la Nature.*

The entrance of a gentleman-looking man broke the conversation. He bowed to the speaker, and, uncovering his head, appeared to wait Vaga's commands; which when announced, with the utmost politeness, and even friendly cordiality, he begged her to be seated.

“ Madam,” said he, “ I edit the Magazine published here. I have read your sketch, and shall pay it every attention it deserves.”

The delicacy, so conspicuous in this address, was more gratifying to our Vaga’s pride of heart, than the most studied praise. She colored deeply, and bowed her head:—a drop of gratitude trembled in the corner of her eye.

“ Sir,” said she, “ you are very good; and I thank you.”

The Chevalier now took his leave.

“ That is a first-rate character,” said the editor, closing the office door, and addressing himself to Vaga. “ He was born in this country, but naturalised and educated in France.—He has had twelve dramatic works crowned in Paris.—Never did any writer display such various excel-

lence:—his letters, dissertations, or poetical effusions, bear the same characteristics, abounding in wit, brilliancy, and strength. The greatest crowned heads in Europe have acknowledged his merit, and bestowed marks of honor upon him. He passed his youth in camps and courts, and would seem to have been created for war and love:—but virtuous glory is the goddess he worshipped; and he has paid his devotions solely at her shrine."

" Has he been long in this country?" said Vaga.

" The Chevalier came to Ireland," replied the editor, " in the year 1796; —and I'll give you his history, as I have collected it from himself. I shall say nothing of the years of his cradle. He was carried successively to Dublin, to England, to Paris, and, having com-

pleted his education, was inscribed a volunteer in the regiment of \* \* \* \*, and, immediately after, appointed to a commission in the French cavalry. Of his early services I am not warranted to speak: but conjecture assures me they have been meritorious; for he was named by his most Christian Majesty, Louis XVI. colonel of \* \* \* \* regiment: but, not having yet attained the requisite age, which was that of twenty-three, the commission was held open for him; and, during the interval, he got a troop of horse. The misfortunes of France were about to commence; and, attached, as he was, to his royal master, he followed the fortunes of the family, and, hastening after the Count of Artois to Coblenz, carried two sabres to his Royal Highness, from his illustrious sons, the Dukes of Angoulême and Berri, (the

latter having said, that Patroclus ought to carry the arms of Achilles.) He then joined the royalists—made the campaign of 1792—and, in the beginning of 1793, was among the brave defenders of Maestricht, which town was, according to the expression of Louis XVIII. the repository of sceptres and crowns.—Such,” continued the editor, “ is, in part, the military character of the hero you have seen:—but who can speak of his heart, as it deserves? for it is above all praise! Yes!” (his voice softening) “ benevolence has surely chosen the Chevalier for her representative on earth:—he has a tear for pity; and his purse is open to the distressed.”

Vaga started up—“ May I hope to see this gentleman again?” said she.

The editor looked surprised; but Vaga still persisted. “ I have a par-

ticular reason," said she, " for asking; and . . . and" . . . Here, pride, or something like it, broke her delivery.

The editor's eyes were now intently fixed on our heroine; and they were such as appeared to take in all space. He seemed desirous to search her soul; and there was something in his steady gaze, from which Vaga recoiled—and yet she knew not why.—Her face was in a glow; and, her confusion visibly increasing, the literary man abruptly demanded, whether she had any commands for him?

Vaga, entirely bereft of self-possession by the reproof couched in this evasion of her question, blushed even deeper than before.

The editor regarded her attentively; and gradually the cloud of suspicion on his brow cleared.—"Who is this genuine creature?" thought he—"and

what is she?—Her manner is perplexed—agitated:—and that tear upon her cheek tells she is unhappy.”

Vaga smiled.

Oh! Genius!—a dew-flower thou art:—and thy beauties, like those of the rose, seem sweetest, when the sun succeeds a shower—because, then, every drop is a spangle on thy stem!

While these ideas were passing through the editor’s mind, a very elegant equipage drew up, and a lady alighted.—“ Well, Mr. Editor!” (the footman throwing open the office door,) “ are you charmed with my muse?”

“ I am always charmed with the *fair*,” was the reply.

“ Nay, but have you given me a *place*? ”

“ We are supplied for a year to come,” said the editor, “ by letters

*post paid*, from literary correspondents in every part of the kingdom."

"Then I shall print at my *own expense*," said the lady.

"And there is an advantage in that," replied the editor; "for you can then give a good outside to your work, and swell your fame at once, by a couple of dozen of editions, *mock-sale*, or a word to the wise."

The lady walked off, without deigning the compliment of a courtesy, and, mounting her triumphal car, left the Temple of the Muses far behind her.

An elderly man next entered.— "Mr. Editor," said he, "are you in the habit of purchasing essays at this office?"

"Sir," replied the editor, "our literary department is filled, at no small expense; and I am sorry to say, the encouragement we receive is by no

means flattering to the genius of the country. However, the fault is not there," continued the editor; " for the Irish public is ever discriminating, liberal, and just: but a great nation in decay, sir—Here, the fine arts are, as it were, under the patronage of a headless trunk."

" London, at least," said the former speaker, " is a mart."

" Ay, indeed!" replied the editor —" it is the grand emporium of the world; and genius and talent, there, have ample play-room.—In London, it is not the person, nor the name, but the article, that is looked to:—a ready sale for every thing that is good —value given for gold:—but, as to speculation, here, the people think themselves well off, if they can buy bread."

" Sir!" and the unknown lifted

the hat from his head—" what end can it answer, to remind a man of his misfortunes?"

Vaga was, hitherto, all ear; and now, a sort of inspiration taking possession of her—her mind seemed to expand beyond the bounds of mortality.—There was an impetuosity in her present feelings, that she could neither account for, nor control: it was like an ungovernable torrent, and bore down all before it.

" Sir," said she, " the voice that reminds man of his misfortunes, is either the angel of destruction, who, with shouts of joy, proclaims the labor of God in vain, (for ' man was' not ' made to mourn') or a spirit of heaven, rousing his dormant energies from the trance of the heart—another sleep of death, which the mortal poison of misery produces. Yet," con-

tinued Vaga, “ a man must not be dismayed!—’Tis the fertilising dews, that render the earth productive! When man weeps, he sows in anguish—but often reaps, from vexation and care, a fruitful harvest.”

“ What, but the labor of human hands, raised cities?—What, but the industry of a people, causes empires to flourish?—What conquered the wild waters’ rage, and covered the sea with ships, but man?—What occasioned war and devastation in the world?—The ambition of man.—What subjugated man, but the injustice of man?—And, lastly, who is man’s oppressor?—Man!—Shall man, then, despair to conquer man?—No!” said Vaga—“ Let virtue, perseverance, and a good cause, always hope, but never despair;—for, ‘ man was’ not ‘ made to mourn.’ ”

Vaga paused.—The old gentleman,

putting on his hat, took a pinch of snuff; and the editor, no longer able to contain, laughed outright.

“ Come, my little Cicero in petticoats!” said he, “ you must not be angry: but indeed you are too green in the art as yet, to be trusted to go alone.”

“ Pray, madam,” inquired the old gentleman, taking another pinch of snuff, “ may I make bold to ask, are you learned in the law?”

“ Yes, sir,” said Vaga, (her wit sharpened by the laugh raised at her expense) “ self-taught, in the law of humanity, I am.”

“ Then,” interrupted her interrogator, “ it appears you are deeply read.”

“ Yes, sir—in the book of nature.”

“ Tut! tut!” replied the old man —“ Answer me plainly—Are you a learned lady?”

“ No, sir: I have not that honor.”

“ Then, madam, if so,” said he, “ you only resemble the bulk of mankind; for you have yet to learn.”

The speaker walked out; and a beautiful youth walked in.—He was dressed in deep mourning, which not a little conspired to show to advantage the exquisite delicacy of his complexion.—His eyes were cast downwards; and the long lashes that fringed their lids, were as the ebon curtains of the night, veiling the light of the heavens.

Beauty is a universal object of worship.—Beauty first inspired the poet’s song, and guided the heaven-creative pencil of the artist.—What tongue can speak its witchery?—whose pen express its magic power?—Nought, nought, but silence: and silence

sometimes discourses—oh! how eloquently!

Modesty is the drapery of Nature; and, when the graces of delicacy are blended with the enchantments of love, the fire of beauty is like the blaze of the sun; for we behold, reflected in its glories, the stamp of the Divinity!

Young Edwy!—But, who can paint the charms of his mind and person?—The graces of the latter, to be estimated, must be seen—not described: and the former is so far above the stretch of mortal conception, that, mutually considered, they may be said to force, “like the arrow, beyond the ken of the eye!”—A youth, reader, scarcely eighteen—yet was he a literary Colossus, supporting, by his abilities, an aged mother, a widowed sister, and her orphan child—and, as it were,

bearing them (an honorable burden) on his shoulders; for this youth united to the mind of strength the heart of affection!—Yes! Edwy was a young disciple of Minerva; and the voice of his mistress “ sent him forth to fame,” with the emblem of victory in his hand, a branch of peace!!!

“ I am truly concerned,” said the editor, shaking the youth by the hand, “ to hear of your sorrow; but public gratitude (that rare grace) sympathises with you on the death of your friend, and ought to fix her statue among those of its benefactors.”

A lucid beam brightened the dejected countenance of the youth.—“ That once great and excellent woman,” replied he, “ is indeed laid low!”—Struggling to govern the emotions of his heart, he stopped:—but

Edwy was born to feel.—Recollected sorrow shadowed, without obscuring, the seraphic smile playing through the line of sensibility in the features—kissing the cheek, and, in descending beams, touching the lips!—All the heart burst to his eyes, and the unmanning tear abashed him:—he hung down his head—soul and body crushed by the dæmon of despair:—but, Nature imparting to him sanity of mind, he looked up—and Vaga powerfully impressed by the silent sorrow of the youth, the tear of sympathy (soothingly beautiful) trickling down her cheek—his grief now lost in the emotion of gratitude—his every sense was rapturous; and gently drawing near her, though the usage of the world forbade the declaration of his feelings, his whole heart spoke in his eyes—and

told that his soul was, from the beginning, in good fellowship with Vaga.

The editor was a man who intuitively entered into the characters of others. He respected talent, as all do, who in reality possess it—and felt real gratification in presenting to each other two beings so congenial in disposition and pursuit.

“ My dear Edwy ! ” said he, “ this is the lady to whom we are indebted for the sketch of Killarney.”

Vaga courtesied ; and Edwy’s gallantry seeming to acknowledge her as a superior, after the manner of the Tuscan character, he saluted her :—then taking a folded paper from his breast, “ Madam,” said he, “ your literary effort gave birth to this effusion—’Tis called ‘ The Hill of Fame,’ and designed for you.”

A mantling blush—the harbinger of joy—flushed over Vaga's face, neck, and arms, as she received the precious gift, and read as follows—

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### *The Hill of Fame.*

THIS celebrated mount is the entrance to the field of light—celestial image of eternal day! the scene of suns unnumbered! the care of Heaven! the delight of Nature! a verdant lawn, where Inspiration, on her couch of laurels, “in a fine phrensy,” rolls her eagle-eyes abroad—and fixes unshaken on the mass of flame, which shows the work divine! Here in this field the child of fancy ranges—tunes her simple reed, and sings harmonious to the gracious Power who first called forth

her untutored lay!—Here, Taste and Judgement twine the wreath, and Genius binds the brows of bards, philosophers, heroes!—Here the school of Plato is revived again!—Here, Eloquence and divine Love, led by their immortal disciple Plato, converse with Socrates! Here Virtue smiles triumphant!—The happy place guarded by beasts and reptiles, none can pass herein, but poesy's own creation; and enchantment springs from them; for, when they wave their magic wand, all-witching in their harmony, they charm or they subdue.—The serpent, having lost the power to hiss, retires: the asp, deprived of his poison, harmless skulks away: the toad can emit venom no more; and the brute softened by the melting tones of Nature, while the poet sings, or the historian speaks, the tiger crouches—the bear

lies entranced—and the lion, attentive to the melody, suppliant bends before the ingenious youth, licking his feet, and spreading his shaggy mane beneath his steps!—A smiling train then appears:—they hail the candidate in the road to fame, and, pointing to the hill, each presents an offering!—The laughing Loves scatter roses—Wisdom brings the Mantuan bay—the Graces proffer eternal bloom—Apollo arms him with a lyre—Innocence places an olive crown upon his head—Glory urges him to ascend the steep—and Hope waves him to the summit!—The height once gained, Fame sounds her trumpet: the immortals, in the field of light, catch the victor's name; and cheering, their voices are echoed from pole to pole! The young initiated hears the tuneful strain, and sees himself reflected in the beams of

an eternal sun : his form is a radiant mass of brightness—his face beauteous as the morning, when Phœbus shines through the orient coloring of Nature! —Lightnings are in his hand !—The spoils of worlds cling to his chariot wheels !—He is drawn by doves, and the trophied car rolls over the globe, glorious as the orb that lights the universe !

Vaga paused—and her spirit mounting on the seraph wing of hope, the pencil of fancy may sketch the wanderer, floating in search of sun-beams.

Without the soft zephyrs of encouragement, the sweetest buds of genius fade away beneath a cruel blight.—But, touched by the magic wand of hope, the withered flower shall revive again, and put forth the brightest tints of the spring; a beauty that

nothing but Nature herself can disenchant.—The literary adventurer ought to be too much of a philosopher, to prize greatly what has been gained lightly.—We cannot attain the summit of a steep without proportionate exertion; neither must we expect to rise to any height, but by perseverance and labor.

“ An author,” said Edwy, “ requires the strength and courage of a lion—with the patience and firmness of a philosopher; and, in repeating this precept for the guidance of another, I read a useful lesson to myself. Yes,” (turning to the editor) “ grief for the loss of my first, my best, and dearest friend, has, I am sensible, oppressed and sunk me.—But I will shake off my weakness, and no more disgrace the example she set me in her strength

of mind, which was beyond description—almost beyond conception. My disposition, too, is that which can stifle its agonies, and bend to every ill. Sometimes, indeed, my bodily strength fails before my internal struggles; yet no sufferings have ever made me shrink from the performance of my duties!—“I have a dear mother,” he added; “and to place her in the midst of comfort, that her last days, at least, may be passed in peace—is the crown for which I toil.”

“Virtuous, good young man!” said Vaga—“may the prayer of your heart be accorded!—and may your piety, as a beacon to prevent shipwreck, light me on my perilous way!”—She courtesied low, and, closing the office door after her, returned to her humble home, where resuming her dutious

employment, in attendance on a sick parent, she fulfilled the sacred command of him who said, “ Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

## CHAPTER 4.

THE last shilling now expended, Vaga looked on the world around her, as a traveller views the mazes of a wilderness, unknowing which road to choose. A knock at the door broke her melancholy cogitations.—It was the mistress of the mansion.

“ Miss,” said she, “ I want my week’s rent, due this day.”

“ You can’t have it,” said Vaga.

“ I must,” was the retort.

“ There is a sick person in the room,” said Vaga; “ and I beg your

indulgence may be shown, if not to me, at least to her."

"Balderdash!" replied the landlady. "If so be you're a writer, and live in idleness, doing no good for yourself or for any one else that thanks you—that is no reason that I am to take up with your stuff, and take verses for payment, when cash may be had!—No! no! I'll none on't.—No disparagement meant:—it may be all mighty fine: only we are seldom for valuing what we don't understand. So, one word for all, am I to be paid, or not?"

"Madam," said Vaga, "you have had my answer."

"Then pack up your alls," cried the mistress of the mansion, in no very tender tone; "for, without payment, you shall not pass another night under my roof."

“ Say not so,” said Vaga. “ Surely you could not be so inhuman” (pointing to the bed) “ as to turn out a languishing—perhaps a dying fellow creature.”

“ Come! come!” rejoined the landlady, “ your poets’ tricks will not do with me; for I despise all such.—Nothing but pride and rags—have they any more on their bones than in their pockets?—All Pharaoh’s lean kine:—famine in their looks—beggars in state—or alms-askers, only that they are ashamed to speak! but their wants are known well enough: the very boys in the street have it—and the dogs, for the matter of that:—for, a decayed appearance is hooted and hunted all as one as something wild—the honest people making game for themselves.”—Here, flouncing out of the room, she stumbled over some-

thing at the door.—It was a hand-basket, in which was a loaf of bread, a bottle of Port wine, and a letter for Vaga.

“ Dear me ! ” thought the landlady, recovering herself, and examining the arms on the seal—“ this is a little genteelish, or so.—I wonder who brought it, and where it came from ; and I wish I could fathom the contents.”

Her curiosity now on the wing, she took up the basket and carried it to Vaga.

Insolence and impertinence had power over Vaga’s feelings, but none over her self-possession. She took the letter, and calmly broke the wax.—A bank-note for fifty pounds met her sight, with the following Laconic address—

“ VAGA,

“ Take bread, and be  
thankful ! Be patient, and fear not.

“ BATHMENDI.”

“ Dublin, August 1st, 1801.”

Our heroine, trembling with joy and thanksgiving, rushed to the bed, and, dropping on her knees beside it —extending forward the bank-bill— “ Chili !” cried the devout girl, “ see what Heaven has sent to raise and comfort you.”

The hostess was now all ears and eyes : and, as fortune in a great degree sways the world, in this instance she may be said to have come under its influence.

“ Aye, indeed !” said the mistress of the mansion, dexterously changing sides—“ and never came in better time. —God help the sick !—they require

a something to cheer and support them: and, for my part, I always pity those that are ill and in want!—Bad health is sorrow enough, without poverty and taunts to make it worse. However, I never yet could abide an unfeeling person; but, we women are naturally inclined to tenderness; and the men call us nothing but a parcel of good-natured fools for our trouble."

At this break, Chili being overcome with weakness, Vaga entreated the landlady to suspend her eloquence for a moment, and pour out a glass of wine for the fainting invalid; which being accordingly done, while Vaga was administering the cordial to her parent—this good lady, never scrupling to help herself, it is to be presumed, drank to the good health of all present; for, to use her husband's words, she came down stairs, blind.

But a nap soon set her eye-sight to rights, and showed her seeing her way as clear before her as ever. When, in the course of a few hours, Vaga waited on her with the rent, and having paid her, was retiring—

“ Miss,” said the landlady, “ won’t you wait for a receipt?”

“ When it is your convenience, I shall take one,” said Vaga: “ but, until then, I cannot doubt”....

“ Ah!” interposed the landlady, looking as if sugar-plums were in her mouth—“ that is as much as to say, I did not place the same dependence on you:—but, indeed, I never was given to suspicion—not I.—Who would go to look in the oven for any one, unless they had been there themselves?—And, I’m sure, a young woman, with your pretty modest behaviour, might be relied on any where:

—and so I told our lodger—the old man in the first floor, when, hearing you crying the other day, he questioned me about you.—And, now that I think of it, who knows but it was he that set the basket at your door? —for I saw his eyes water, when I gave him a history of your distress, and your sitting up a-nights with that poor sick body, and your grief after your father—and all the tears you shed:—but, he is so solid and so dry, I almost think he is a witch—for ever reading, and walking up and down the room, and talking to himself—and, then, he is so cross, he seems ready to bite the nose off one, if they speak.— But, after all that, he is the best lodger that ever set foot in this house; for I provide him in every thing, and he pays his bills, without ever examining further than the *tot.*”

“ I would not be remiss,” said Vaga,  
“ if I thought the gentleman of whom  
you speak was my kind benefactor.”

“ Hush!” replied the landlady—  
“ that’s more than I dare say to him,  
or you either. Besides, what is it but  
my prate?—Lord! if he got the  
slightest hint of what I said, he would  
not stay in the house an hour longer;  
for he hates all woman-kind; and it  
was on condition that I never would  
suffer any other petticoat, but my own,  
to enter his apartment, that he took  
the lodgings, giving me my own terms  
for the same.—And, then,” continued  
the landlady, “ if he wouldn’t frighten  
you, if you saw him, in his great big  
bushy wig—like the doctors long ago!  
—But,” (starting) “ there’s his rap  
at the hall-door:—two knocks—I  
know the signal; and I must get the  
children and every living thing out of

the way, before I let him in."—So saying, bustling through the hall, hushing cats and children—she gave the old man admittance; and, returning into the parlour, was about to resume, when—a sound of lamentation proceeding from the yard—fearful lest it should drown the music of her voice—she slapped down the window, pettishly observing—that she had a mortal aversion to every thing that was dismal; and, on Vaga's inquiring whence issued the complaint, and wherefore—

" Oh!" said the hostess, " 'tis nothing, only the family who lodge in my back house—a mother, and her son, mourning over the young woman that died just now—poor things!" (possibly recollecting her assertion, that women are soft-hearted, &c.) " and 'tis ten to one but they will kill themselves with grief, unless

somebody takes compassion on them, and goes in to console them; which is not in my power to do; for I always had a great fear of death, and never could bring myself to look it straight in the face."

"Think you," said Vaga, "that I may venture to attend on these poor people in their sorrow?"

"Aye!" replied the landlady—"and (I warrant it) be welcome as 'the flowers of May;' for the young master is just such another as yourself—and the old woman is a tender, good-natured body—and, if there's no good, there's no harm, in her."

Vaga waited to hear no more; and the lamentation continuing, guided by the sound, she proceeded through the yard, to the house in the rear.—On entering, the first object that met her sight, was Edwy—supporting an

elderly woman in his arms, drying the tears, as they trickled down her aged cheeks, and, in the sweetest accents that humanity ever breathed, trying to reassure, and inspire her with resignation.

The blood rapidly circulated through Vaga's heart: and, her ears catching the words, “my mother! my mother!” repeated with a shriek by a child—turning round, she beheld the remains of a young female, to whom a little boy, between six and seven years old, with eager fondness clung!

Vaga's nerves relaxed: she tottered, and grasping Edwy's offered arm—pale, and trembling, hung upon it.

He led her to a chair.—“Ha!” said he, “I remember well those features:—and are you come to the house of mourning?—Yes! As the angel of humanity descends to chase the fiend

despair from the mansion of the heart, and sooth with the balm of peace the children of affliction!—Here,” continued he, casting himself at the feet of his venerable mother, “ direct, and gratify the fine and generous principle of benevolence.—This old woman has drank the mortal potion of sorrow, leaving only the dregs behind—but it rests with virtue to extract sweets from what remains in the cup;—and an antidote, applied timely, may counteract the operation of the poison.”

Reader! a physician is sometimes necessary to the mind, as well as to the body! To a bosom that is stung, to a heart writhing under the scorpion lash of affliction, the angel voice of pity, alone, can afford relief.—Various are the woes to which “ flesh is heir;” and, the gentle offices of humanity neglected, desolation would

spread so wide around, universal ruin would transform the living world into a dreary burying-place!—But, there are hearts, many hearts, feeling, amiable, and just!—These are they which serve as a chain in the general scheme of Nature, and by which the whole original intention is preserved, and the species kept together!—How blest the man, blest above his fellows, who, in the language of the poet,

“ Looks with gentle pity round, to find  
How he can best relieve another’s woe,  
Or hush the vicious passions into peace.”

The tender feeling of pity disposes us to alleviate misery, and inspires philanthropy, which is the perfection of moral sentiment, because the grand means of accomplishing the beneficent designs of Providence in the formation of the world.—The only true greatness

is virtue; and, in the amiable qualities of the mind, the beggar ranks with the king.—It has been said, that the kingdom of every wise man is in his own breast: and I say, that the privilege of doing good belongs to the poor, in common with the rich; for the exercise of charity is not confined exclusively to the opulent great.—No! the heart is the throne of humanity;—and love, and gentleness, and peace, proclaim the sovereignty of Nature.—The noble sympathies are known to dwell beneath the humble thatch; for the weary pilgrim has often found shelter and sweet repose within the walls of the lowly shed.—A mind that feels, can teach, and may inspire resignation; at all events, kind soothing is calculated to soften and qualify anguish; and, so far, all can command; evincing, that, if we cannot

repel the barbed dart, yet we may bind up the wounds of the sufferer.

Vaga attempted to speak : but, her eyes happening to fix on the body, over which the little boy still hung, kissing the unconscious lips, and washing with his tears the mortal remains of his lost mother—all that was flesh in her heart seemed to die within her ; and, at the instant, three men bursting into the room, Edwy, shrinking, as the foremost advanced, and hiding his face in the bosom of his aged parent, cried—

“ Monster ! are you come to tear my heart out ? ”

“ Seise him ! ” replied the ruffian, addressing the infernals at his side, and pointing to the youth—“ That is your prisoner.”

The old woman screamed—and, her withered arms encircling her blooming

boy—"Save him! save him!" quivered on her colorless lips.

As the bird of prey relentless pounces on the young and unresisting victim, so the blood-hounds, with a horrid yell, sprang forward.—But Vaga, casting herself between them and young Edwy—"Here," said she, "monsters! (for I cannot call you men) glut your rage on me, if you dare: but do not defile the altar of Nature with unclean hands; for, don't you see, the son is in the sheltering bosom of his mother?—Or, if you must have human sacrifice," continued Vaga, "look, where death has been at work" (pointing to the corpse)—"and, hungry as you are, the sight will kill all appetite within you.—Yet, compared with such as you, that spoiler is merciful! Yes! death is a sublime victor, who, when he strikes, knocks

off the fetters of his prisoner!—But, when man entralls man, the petty tyrant heaps insult on misfortune; for he imposes chains on the subdued."

Vaga's energies defied repulse—and all that was man, among the savage groupe, felt their force. The bailiffs, shuddering, drew back: but their leader, a second Shylock, called loudly for "the pound of flesh."

"Say what young Edwy owes," said Vaga.

"Twenty pounds," replied the dæmon in human shape.

"Then," said Vaga, "he shall not go to prison, while I have a sum adequate to his release!—This," (taking from her pocket-book a bank-note) "is nearly all I possess on earth; and, what is more, it is the all of a suffering parent; but I can no longer, even in the cause of duty, resist a scene

like the present, harrowing, as it does, my every sense.—Take it then, Edwy; and, when you can, you will in turn assist me; for I am poor, and a child of sorrow, like yourself.”

The hard creditor now said something about a discharge; and the officers mentioned their fees.

“ Silence!” said Edwy, starting up.—He put back Vaga’s hand, and softly whispered—

“ My mother, in her agitation, has fainted:—but your mite is not unhonored; for I can accept of kindness shown to her!—When I am gone, stay, and do what you can to revive her; comfort her, and say, that I shall soon return:—and, as you are so good—so merciful—perhaps” (looking towards the body that slept the sleep of death) “ perhaps”....he stopped—an hysterick affection choaked the power

of speech—but Vaga's quick sense caught his meaning, which mounting to her brain, a pain struck her in the back of her head.

“ The last sad offices shall be performed for the dead,” said she:—“ neither, Edwy, shall the living be forgotten.”

“ Enough!” replied the youth.—For a moment he breathed quick—the lambent flame of gratitude fired his breast—but, in another instant, his blood cooled; and, meditating on the ways of Providence, he calmly walked out of the room, in custody of the officers of the law.

The shrieks of the child recalled the old woman's suspended existence.—“ Edwy is gone,” cried he; “ and the ugly men, who have taken him away, will put him in a bag, and kill him; and then he'll be like poor mamma,

who can't speak to her little boy—  
though I have called to her so often."

The landlady entered; and, her appearance seeming to intimidate the child, he ran behind his grandmother's chair, while Vaga gently chafed her temples (wrinkled more by sorrow, than time) and washed with vinegar the palms of her hands.

"God be merciful to the departed!" said the hostess, turning her back to the corpse: "but 'tis all one; we must go, one time or other; only, as the saying is, a body is for putting off the evil day as long as one can: but, for all that, we must take it in turn; and who knows whom it will fall upon to go next?—So, to repeat the words of the song, "grieving is a folly;" though, to be sure, the loss of master Edwy is enough to go to any woman's heart—such a graceful, loving young

man! so kind, and so dutiful to his mother—so tender and affectionate to his sister; but, poor thing, she's dead now; and as it is all over with her, what use was all the expense he went to—getting himself into debt and danger—paying doctors, buying drugs, and wine, and all such, in cases of sickness—and a lingering one it was—enough to take a fortune to keep it up.—But, as I often said, a grain of prudence is worth a pound of sense. However, I may make myself too busy; and meddlers never get any thanks: therefore, to make a long story short—here is an order on the bank for five pounds, a fortnight's salary, due to master Edwy, which my good man called for at the office, just now—to witness," (glancing an eye-beam at Vaga) " that writing is not so bad a trade as I thought, for

your best working journeymen tailors and shoemakers don't earn weekly more than that. And, from this time, though I should see a poet bare-foot, I am resolved never again to cast the least reflexion on either pen, ink, or paper.

The death of a deserving and beloved daughter had deeply wounded the mother's heart; and the final stroke of her son's imprisonment plunged her into deeper agony.—But the human mind, when strained to its pitch, bends, but to recoil.—A weight proportionate to our strength, may encumber and weigh us down; but, increase the load a degree beyond the limit prescribed, and our powers shall naturally resist and cast the burden.—What applies to a sharp weapon, may be said of sorrow:—when it cuts,

its edge is sometimes blunted. In a word, the unhappy mother's attention was now diverted from the remains of the daughter to the absent son.

Vaga being made known to the old lady by the landlady, how lively was her admiration of a creature, who, needing consolation herself, yet was so ready to administer comfort, and divide her purse with the unfortunate!

“ May the Lord bless her, and increase her store!” said the afflicted mother: “ and, as she came from heaven to soothe and make happy the troubled on earth—Oh! may her life be long, and her virtues bloom for ever!”

“ Why, Vaga,” said Chili—“ why did you suffer the youth to go to prison?—God gave to us; and what

was freely given by him, we should freely share with others."

At this pause, a letter, brought by the penny post, was delivered to Vaga; and her heart acknowledging the superscription, she impatiently tore it open, and read—

" VAGA,

" Yesterday I gave you money: to-day, I would teach you its use.—Take; but do not keep all to yourself. Give to the poor: merit the prayers of the depressed and the humble, and your benefactions shall be repaid in blessings tenfold.—Remember how the man of God restored to the widow her son; and, as you have seen—Oh! Vaga, commiserate suffering virtue!—Go, commune with your own heart; and you may be bettered by its instructions. But,

should you be too timid to obey the voice of benevolence—should you repress your liberality, expect counsel from

“ BATHMENDI.”

“ Dublin, August 2d, 1801.”

“ Oh ! that I might be permitted to know my guardian angel !” said Vaga, eagerly kissing the letter.—“ Yes !” continued she, tying on her bonnet—“ my heart whispers to me instruction ; and I will be taught by its genuine dictates.”

Edwy had not slept during the night ; for the boards of his prison were not calculated to invite repose.—He rose in the morning, harassed, and oppressed with fever. The day was now far advanced, when the turnkey abruptly walking into the gloomy chamber, said—

“ Come, young man, be of good

cheer ; for you may now go about your business.—All's paid ; and here's the young woman herself, come to take you home."

Vaga rushed forward—“ Edwy,” said she, “ you are indebted for your liberation, not to me, but to a much superior agency.—However,” (looking timidly round) “ this is not a place for explanation. Come, then, dear Edwy ! A carriage waits, to take us hence ; and as your mother expects you, give me the happiness of restoring you to her.”

Edwy rose—but, trembling, recoiled ; and covering his face with both his hands, vainly strove to hide his emotion.

“ Egad,” cried the jailor, leering, and winking at Vaga, “ that lad's as soft as mother's milk ; for joy, as well as sorrow, can make him cry.—But you, my fair maid, are a pretty nurse, as

may be ; and you'll hush the baby—will you not?"

Vaga was too much shocked to make any reply : but Edwy, darting an angry glance at the impertinent, spoke in his looks more resentment, than any verbal reproach could convey—and said—

" Vaga, I shall not expose you to further indignity, by chastising an insolent in your presence."—Here catching her hand, he hurried our heroine along ; and having handed her into the hackney coach in waiting, placing himself beside her, motioned for the carriage to drive on.

The youth now made an effort to speak : but so low were his spirits, he could scarcely make himself heard ; and, giving up the attempt, he leaned back his aching head.

Vaga, with real concern, beheld his disordered looks ; and accusing her

own timidity, that suffered him to contend with horrors to which his bodily strength was unequal—she entered on, and gave (with a brief account of her own history) the promised explanation, relating to his enlargement; concluding the detail, by observing, that, should the consequences of what she called her base fear to act worthily, affect Edwy's life, though assured of his charitable forgiveness (it being a sin of omission), she could never forgive herself.—“But,” continued she, “I offer you, amiable, good young man, to him who can minister to soul and body.—May health sweetly smile on you! and may the God of all good preserve you, for the sake of your suffering mother, and the many, generally, whom your pious example may greatly serve.”

The carriage drew up.—“I am not

good at professions," said Edwy, alighting, and assisting Vaga—" but I know I ought to be grateful; and I think I have not an unthankful heart."

It is not the author's care to portray the minutiae of circumstances :—We will leave to imagination, the widow's joy at the restoration of her son—her gratitude to his fair deliverer—together with the gloomy scene the interment of Edwy's regretted sister, which took place the evening after his return home.

Chili was still languishing, and Vaga watching by her, with a solicitude in her countenance, that told her whole happiness was bound in her recovery.

" Angelic Vaga!" said Chili, smiling through her tears, and suppressing a sigh—which being clearly understood by her excellent daughter—

“Chili!” replied Vaga—in the hour of trouble, let us hope for better days.—All those ills may pass away, like a cloud before the sun.—Be you, then, the sun to cheer and enliven me; and Vaga will, with grateful transport, bask in the friendly ray she loves.”

“Sainted creature!” said Chili, “I repose on your affection:—it is the polar star to guide me to peace and happiness; and, when our sorrows pass away—the joy that shall succeed, will indeed resemble the sun, which shines, after the cloud, with redoubled lustre.—Yes! we will hope, and perhaps be disappointed—yet we will hope still; for the siren, though she cheats, cheers.”

“Poor Edwy!” said Vaga—“I left him very ill last night. Pray God he may be better to-day.—Oh! Chili,

for you I rigorously and undauntedly combated all the terrors of the heart—deliberately surrendered up the friend whom I love best on earth, and—leaving the good Angelo to his resentments—dared to follow and adhere to you: yet (with shame I speak it) too soon I turned recreant; for, in the cause of this good youth, I played the coward."

" Say not so," replied Chili: " rather say you had courage to oppose principle to inclination; and that, in order to be just to one, you repressed your generosity towards another:—therefore, 'tis I, not you, that am to blame.—But, dear Vaga, my heart whispers, that Edwy will soon be well; and in that whisper there is no deception:—therefore, let your spirit be at peace, and rest in confidence on that boundless goodness, which visits

the lowest and weakest of his creatures with beneficence, to bless and raise up Edwy—the favorite of Heaven!"

The postman's knock electrifying Vaga, she started up—and, hearing her landlady loudly vociferate her name, breathless with expectation, ran down stairs, and received a sealed packet, which, on opening, she found to contain bank of Ireland notes to the amount of five thousand pounds sterling.

Astonishment sealed our heroine's lips:—she hurried to the bed, and, gently dropping the national paper into Chili's hand, prostrated herself before God.

" 'Tis from our good genius," said Chili, examining the notes:—then Vaga, rising, read aloud the letter:—

“ When Virtue spoke, Vaga was tried, and proved!—Be then, in future, a trusty steward in the service of benevolence.—I invest you with full power to act:—yield a part, and your store shall be replenished.—Go! visit hospitals and prisons:—seek out the victims of disease and penury:—furnish medicine to the sick, food to the hungry, raiment to the naked.—Let the sound of gladness re-echo through the mansion of despair—and, as graves shall, at the great day, give up the dead—so, at your intercession, let jails surrender to new life their no less gloomy inhabitants.—Neither be you unmindful of the frail unfortunate; for it is the duty of true charity to exhort the erring to repentance—to whisper hope and consolation to the dejected—and, finally, to raise up those that fall.—Be kind to all—be

harsh to none:—treat, with the utmost softness, the hardened; for tenderness is an emollient designed for the heart; and, when you look upon the corrupt—see the weakness of human nature, and let the warning affect you.—Learn humility.—Scorn none but the proud; and know, that man's best strength is false, unless invigorated by virtue.—Vaga, your character is not yet formed: but experience shall complete what precept has begun.—The path of life is a thorny maze; and its briars have torn and pierced you already; but, from simples, a precious balsam is often extracted.—Yes! we will travel in quest of this salutary herb; and its juice shall heal all up.—Then, Vaga, go forth.—Your way shall not be solitary, nor your labor unrequited: for, at each pass,

you will meet a sister, and the sons of the earth shall cherish my wanderer.

“ BATHMENDI.”

“ Dublin, August 6th, 1801.”

The secret was expounded.—Vaga felt whence the bounty came.—“ Oh! Angelo!” thought she—“ my honored, my beloved father!—I have found you again—but have not words to greet you; for feeling, like spirit, is invisible.—I was in darkness till you appeared.—A bright constellation you are; and, at an humble distance, I will ever pursue you.”

Our heroine never slackened in the performance of her duties. Each day was now devoted to general usefulness, in the cause of society; and, after her employment, when she returned home, how sweet the reflexion,

that invited her to rest, having the power to say—

“ My God ! I have been engaged in your service, rescued the poor debtor from confinement—the diseased from death—the poor from want—and the abandoned from despair.—Yes ! and such deeds being mine, well may I bless the hour that I was born, for I have not lived in vain.”

Nor did Edwy, when able to go abroad, hesitate to join in her pious labors ; for he was, like Vaga, the enthusiastic votary of universal Nature.

This youth was watchful : but deep thought, not self-reproach, kept him waking. He generally rose with the lark : and, when the morning appeared fine, desirous to share the imparted blessing—softly tapping at our heroine’s chamber door—

“ Oh ! my Vaga !” he would say —waste not in sleep the sweet hour, which Nature and genius loves.—Come, with me, into the morning air ; the early gale is fraught with health and freshness.—It is Zephyrus, that causes the flowers to blow. He will play round your face, and forehead, more invigorating than Arabia’s spice ; and the sun, as it rises, shall catch its brightest beam from you.”

Vaga loved walking, and the country ; and many times, accompanied by Edwy, did she stroll out, and visit the beautiful and magnificent scenery, which the environs of Dublin display, particularly the Phœnix Park. Here, seated on the green turf, listening to the sweet melody of the feathered songsters, they would pass whole hours ; for this amiable young pair delighted in simple pleasures. Then, climbing the

little hills, that adorned and crowned the plain—contemplating with transport, through vista's of trees, a beautiful extent of prospect, rich in verdure, and bounded by mountain scenery, would they offer up homage to the Creator, in the admiration with which his wonderful works inspired them.

Loved and loving, Edwy aspired only to the possession of his mistress's heart. Vaga's esteem and confidence appeared to him the height of human felicity.—To see her, to attend upon her, to be employed for her good, was infinite joy to him: but, as for the gratification of the senses—a thought that way neither debased the delicacy of his attachment, nor offended the innocence and purity of its object.—The pleasures Edwy sought, were those of the mind: and

none other are durable.—The delicious calm of pure and temperate felicity alone is lasting; and the affections of Edwy, well regulated by wisdom and virtue, partook more of the character of sober friendship, than of the lively emotions of the heart; and when love is thus nearly allied to reason, Heaven's own voice responds to that of Nature.

## CHAPTER 5.

“ **E**DWY,” said Vaga, “ it is required of me, by Bathmendi, to search out objects of charity, generally.—Guided by observation, and feeling, I have already given two thousand five hundred pounds to the relief of private individuals ; and it becomes my next care to inform myself respecting the many benevolent institutions existing in this city, which, calling loudly for panegyric, have rendered Dublin deservedly renowned for its charity.

In pursuing this inquiry, the young pair first directed their attention to

the Foundling Hospital; and, having gained admittance, behold them reviewing, with awful admiration, this sublime testimonial of the *vice* and the *virtue* of man.

At each cradle sat a nurse, in attendance on two children.—Vaga looked upon a blooming, smiling infant:—it lifted up its little hand; and a drop of social tenderness fell from Vaga's eye.

Vaga then turned round her head:—another child met her sight:—it was wan and worn, and in strong convulsions.

“ Oh! suffering babe!” said Vaga, “ how shall the authors of thy misery answer unto thee?—There, forlorn innocent! thou liest stretched in all the agony of death!—No parent—no relative—no natural friend, to close thy heavy eye-lids, and kiss

away the tear upon thy cheek!—Oh! *man!* such, too often, is the price nature pays for thy brutality and wickedness! Wronged beauty, shame, and the timorous part of woman, mutinous to tenderness (because betrayed), cuts through the tie that should hold the mother to her offspring:—yea! ere it has yet been born—and, when the hapless tell-tale reaches the goal of life—behold the little stranger (as it were) solitary and alone, left to—die!—But there is one bosom still open to the outcast. Meek charity in this her hallowed fane presides; and the refuse of the earth is taken under her fostering wing. Here, mercy, in divine perfection, is at hand, preparing for the suffering innocent, when, like the troubled sea, it cannot rest, the last retreat from human woe, the grave.”

Vaga subscribed five hundred pounds to the fund for the support of the Foundling Hospital ; and next proceeded to visit the Lock Hospital, established for the recovery of diseased beauty.

“ I shall subscribe seven hundred and fifty pounds to this institution,” said Vaga, as she ascended the steps. —Several medical men, high in reputation, passed out, as she went in. But not choosing to view a scene which could only shock modesty, she inquired of the superintendant, if among the patients there were any who were likely to leave the way of wickedness. She left a handsome donation to be given to such as, it might be hoped, only wanted the means to live, and who would willingly reform if assistance was lent to their endeavours.

Something like a skeleton appeared.

—Vaga started.—It was a young woman: her countenance was cadaverous—her form shrunk, and withered:—and, as she passed, tottering in her weakness, our heroine stretched forth her hand, and saved the languid wretch from falling.

“ Poor enfeebled creature!” said Vaga.—“ Here, lean on me—I’ll assist you.”

“ Oh!” interposed the guide, “ this is the girl that was discharged this morning.—She is well enough now, only a little weak or so; but, though young in years, she is old in sin; and I’ll lay ten to one she’s back in the hospital, in one month, as bad as ever.”

“ Do not reproach her,” said Vaga, “ for taunts only drive the guilty to despair!”

The unfortunate raised her sunken eyes, and looking up in Vaga's face—burst into tears.

"If repentant," said Vaga, (tenderly drying with her handkerchief the drops that fell), "hope, poor girl, and weep no more."

Again the hapless wretch looked up, and again our heroine addressed soft words of comfort to her.

"Who is it that deigns to speak so gently to one so lost?" said the unfortunate.

"A being, who *pities* the whole of her suffering species," replied Vaga; "but never shall take upon her to *condemn* any."

"God bless you for your forbearance!" was now repeated, in querulous accents, by the unfortunate.

She was now turning away from Vaga:—

“ Whither are you going?” said Vaga, stopping her.

“ Into the streets,” answered the trembler.

“ Have you no home?”

“ No, none.”

“ Have you no natural friends?”

“ None that will acknowledge me,” said the unfortunate.

“ And are you about to resume your miserable excesses?”

“ I have no other means to live,” rejoined the wretch; “ and I fear to—die!”

“ Then,” said Vaga, “ if you are sorry for the past, and will reclaim from sin, you shall be protected.” So saying, motioning to the poor girl to follow, she walked on.

Our heroine was now joined by Edwy. Taking his arm, and pointing to her follower, she said:

“ We shall not go home without our errand, my friend; for I bring with me a creature once lost, and hope to restore the strayed sheep to the Shepherd.”

Vaga had no sooner arrived at her lodging, than the landlady, having got a glimpse of the unfortunate, hastened after Edwy, to make what she called the necessary inquiries: and the youth, unpractised in any disguise, (because virtue needs none), garrulous in praise of his beloved Vaga, gave a full account, how, and where, she had passed the morning.

The hostess, greatly affected by the mention of so much wealth, contrived to squeeze out a tear at that part of the narrative which related to the Foundling Hospital: but, when the youth touched on the Lock—surprise, throwing her off all guard, venting

nothing but invective against that institution, she declared it was a nuisance in the city—an encouragement to vice—that every modest woman was ready to expire with shame at the mention of it; and that, for her part, she would rather go a mile out of her road any day, than subject her eyes to be offended by the sight of it.

“ Then,” said Edwy, “ how will you bring yourself to look upon one that was once its unhappy tenant? for the amiable Vaga has taken under her protection a creature just discharged from that establishment.”

The hostess was combustible; and her pride catching the alarm: “ What!” said she, (her face in a blaze), “ is my honest dwelling turned into a nest for wantons? my house polluted, and my good name exposed to the censure of my neighbours, for harbouring those

whom every door is shut against?—However, I shall take warning in time, and put the hussy out."

But this good lady, though she was so very rigid in the support of her reputation, was not over-scrupulous in the observance of her word. Certain it is she went up stairs in a rage: but she cooled before she came down again; for Vaga softened her heart towards the unfortunate, by putting into her hand a fee for her good-will. And here it may be necessary as well to observe, that after she had lived some time with Vaga, and evinced by her behaviour that she was a sincere penitent, her benefactress prevailed on a benevolent lady to take the unfortunate girl into her service, and had the satisfaction to find her charity was not abused.

Twelve hundred pounds were still

in bank; and the following day Vaga sent a donation, of one hundred pounds each, to six other charitable institutions in the city; viz. Simpson's Hospital for the Blind,—the Orphan House,—the Incurable,—Madam Stephens's,—the Fever Hospital,—and the Magdalen Asylum: reserving the remaining six hundred pounds, as a deposite to the memory of the immortal Swift:—that extraordinary genius, who silenced criticism with one stroke of his pen! who, glorious as the sun, enlightened, cheered, and dazzled all mankind with his brightness! and whose last beam transcends the effulgence of his life's course; because, when he set, he went down in the bosom of his country, warming and smiling on her devoted children, in their gloom!

It was about twelve o'clock at noon

when Vaga and Edwy appeared at the gate of St. Patrick's Hospital, requiring admittance.

“ You may walk into the court-yard,” said the porter, “ beckoning a man forward, that stood in the porch.

The man advanced:—“ Who do you want?” said he, scowling at the youthful pair.

Edwy soon satisfied his inquiries; and the fellow's visage brightening, he put his hand to his hat.

“ There can be no objection to your seeing the establishment,” said the man; “ and, as I have some power here, I'll undertake to guide, and explain every thing to you.”

A gratuity for his trouble was given; and the fellow, with subservient civility, led the way.

Entering one of the wards appro-

priated to lunatics on the foundation, the whispering sound of several voices hummed along the walls; and Vaga, clinging close to Edwy, cast a fearful glance around.

O! it was a tomb of living death! The sun rose on the exterior; but all was dark within!

A yell struck Vaga's ear! She grasped Edwy's arm.

“ Young lady,” said the guide, “ let not the cries of the insane terrify you, for here they are kept from every mischief.”

A lunatic sitting on the ground, now catching Vaga's gown, piteously repeated:

“ Bring me to my mother! Bring me to my mother!” Another came flitting by; and putting her forefinger on her lip, whispered:

“ Hush ! hush ! or they’ll hear you.”

Next was seen a form, anxiously pursuing her own shadow, playing on the floor ! Then came forward a being platting straws, and smiling on vacancy.

Vaga’s soul yearned to give them comfort : but the light of consolation fell in vain ; for madness is sometimes insensible to the friendly ray.

A knock was heard ; and the door being opened, an elderly lady was admitted. Her presence was noble—her aspect full of benign sweetness. She stepped with firmness ; yet the tear, trembling on her eye-lid, betrayed the meltings of her heart.

An universal greeting marked her approach. Some kissed her hand. Others courtesied. Many more tes-

tified their joy by a laugh: and not a few pressed about her, demonstrating their regard in various ways. The first expressed a tender welcome. The second chided her for not coming sooner.—And every countenance testified the joy her presence caused.

Vaga's heart bounded to meet the stranger: and Edwy, no less prepossessed, respectfully moved aside.

“ That is the strangest woman alive,” said the guide, in an undertone, looking after the lady.

“ May I ask who she is?” rejoined the youth, speaking in the same key.

“ They call her Benigma here,” said the man:—“ but that's not her right name. She visits us every day, and, in my mind, she's as mad as Bedlam, herself: but, if I had the

taming of her, I think I'd soon let her know who I am: for you can't think all the trouble she gives the people! Coming, every day, to see justice administered, (as she says). Calling us to task if the least thing goes amiss. Threatening to complain to the courts, and talking law, if we so much as budge. And, somehow, we are all got very shy of her; for she has words at will, and never spares any, but idiots, and the like: and, to right them, I do in my heart believe she would face a cannon: but there's something wrong in her. If she was a natural body, would she take delight in such dismal creatures as these? Soothing, and making much of them; buying them this, that, and the other!—I'll not credit it. Fools of that description are not going, now-a-days."

Turning into another apartment, the old lady advanced to meet them.

“ Ah ! ” said she, “ what have you done with my poor friend ? ”

“ Your friend is safe enough,” replied the fellow, gruffly.

“ Safe, I believe,” said the old lady; “ but is the good creature well ? ”

“ All within these walls,” rejoined the keeper, “ have every proper care and attention paid them; and that is all I know about the matter.”

“ Of the care and attention paid to patients in this heaven-born institution,” replied the old lady, “ I never entertained a doubt. The humanity that raised it, shall prop it up for ever: nor dare you, or any other hireling, wantonly touch a single hair on the head of any individual whom it protects. The laws are its guardians;

and God himself watches over lunatics and little children."

The fellow's manners, a little softened by this just rebuke, he relaxed from his reserve, and informed the lady, that her friend had been outrageous, and was obliged to be confined.

Vaga saw the tear that dropt from Benigma's eye.

"Sir," said she, "I left a manuscript of mine with my poor friend, the last day I was here; and perhaps you will have the goodness to get it for me?"

"With pleasure," replied the keeper, "if this lady and gentleman (bowing to Vaga and Edwy) will excuse my attendance for a moment: and the young pair testifying the most willing compliance, he proceeded into an adjoining cell, and was

heard loudly demanding the manuscript.

“ Let me see Benigma,” replied a voice: “ but, until then, I’ll die, ere I part with what she gave me in care.”

The keeper attempted to take the manuscript by force.

“ No, no!” exclaimed the voice: “ as the property of an insane, you want to keep it; but I’ll die ere a line be lost to my kind friend.”

Benigma was all heart.—“ Desist,” cried she, “ I beg—I command !”

The keeper, grinning horribly, came out.

“ Oh! my friend!” repeated the voice within, “ are you come to save me?”

“ Be calm,” replied Benigma.

“ Will you not come to me?” rejoined the voice. “ Surely you cannot be afraid of one, who would die to pro-

tect you ! But, if so, let me remain here—even here, for ever, rather than alarm the delicate, noble mind of my Benigma!"

The old lady rushed into the cell: but a moment had scarcely elapsed, when she returned, evidently surprised and shocked.

" I'm sure," said the keeper, redenning, " for the life of me I can't tell what you are making such a fuss about ! If we try our hearts out, we can't please you ! Howsomever, it is almost impossible to satisfy *some* women ; because they must have every thing their own way, and never have the least consideration, or make the smallest allowances, for a man, in the exercise of his duty ; which is hard enough upon us at times : looking after them who can't look after themselves, and keeping

things to order all the day long: but if it be along of taking away the clothes you are in such a fluster, would you have us leave them to be torn to tatters? I declare, (rubbing down his sleek chin), I wonder a settled person of your standing would not be more discreet, in a manner, than to indulge foolishness, and come here, talking nonsense from morning till night! But I suppose it was after this rate you made ducks and drakes of your fine estate, that is, as they tell me, at nurse for your extravagance."

" True," faintly articulated Benigma. "' The children of darkness are wiser than the children of light!' I am, indeed, another Timon, and have scarcely any thing left to give: but not, like him, a misanthrope; for, if I had the means, I would bestow largely on those in need. But I do not repine.

Having health, and a conscience unsullied, I may still reckon on countless blessings: and the joys of heaven, subject to no decay, are mine. I am free from obligation to any, and above insult: and though the want of liberal means may sometimes hurt my mind, having the wish, without the ability, to assist my poor friends, and even my enemies, in distress, I bow to the supreme decree; assured that the wisdom of him, who penetrates his own works, promotes what is best for us; knowing that in poverty his creatures find security; for then hope and faith blossom.

“ Benigma!” replied the voice, “ in your heart there is yet a fund rich in mercy! Your energies are equal to all my wants; and you have to spare for other imbeciles like myself. Money bestowed on such as we, would be as

dust before a hurricane. But you bring us better: you come replete with consolation, and you are our shield! The Divinity, in you called mind, beams sweetly, on beclouded melancholy, a soft and soothing ray; which, seen, and always hailed by madness, resembles her first and last solace, the moon: that gentle and tender light, breaking the profound and horrid darkness which at stated intervals crosses the sun in his path, and involves the world."

"Yes," replied Benigma; "and you, my friend, were once a luminary. But now, (weeping) what are you? A chained eagle, the bird of Jove, whose sight, only, can salute the sun! Alas! alas!" continued the old lady, "and are you bound no more to resume your celestial flight? No more to exert those wondrous powers,

which are the property of mind? But your understanding soared too high, and none on earth are permitted to pass a certain boundary. .... 'Tis then from natural and physical causes your wings have been clipped. Yet your agency, of sublime and heavenly importance, is only suspended for a time; and, if not *here*, you shall, at least, *hereafter*, come forth perfect; for Heaven leaves not its own work unfinished."

"No!" said the voice, energetically; "I will not die for any; rather, let me live for all."

"Rare creature!" replied Benigma: "Are we not daily dying, that we may live for ever? What so oft as affliction snaps the tenure of our lives? Sorrow causes pain, and pain terminates in death."

"You reason on principles," said

the voice: "but I suffer no pain. I only feel a little cold; for the place is chill around me."

"When you behave well," roared the keeper, "you shall have your clothes; and not till then."

The old lady darted an angry glance at the cruel giber.

"Restore them instantly!" said she, in a tone that enforced command. "Nay, no arguments; I'll hear none. I shall be answerable for the issue."

"If you provide more clothes," replied the keeper, "in case these are destroyed, I'm sure I can have no objection to your seeing your fancy out; and, as you are in for it, (kicking a small parcel out of an adjacent corner), perhaps you will follow the business up, and take upon yourself to deliver the finery where it will be soon made a dress of."

“ I have no fears,” said the old lady, “ and shall most willingly be the bearer, as far as delicacy will permit.”

Here, Edwy, smiling significantly at Benigma, caught up the parcel, and darted into the cell.

“ How kind is that youth!” said the old lady. “ Nor am I less indebted to you, my sweet girl,” now viewing our heroine with evident admiration and pleasure.

“ Madam!” replied Vaga, courtesying, “ we are happy, most happy, to be suffered to attend upon you; and amply repaid by your polite notice.”

The vermillion of sensibility mantled on Benigma’s cheek. She took Vaga’s hand; and, gently pressing it, said with tenderness:

“ I shall not forget you in my prayers. But, tell me:—(Ah! may I ask)—tell me, my dear young lady,

are you come, like me, to sympathize with some unhappy sufferer within these walls?"

" All beneath this roof," replied Vaga, " are my brothers and sisters; and the visitation under which they labour, is an additional claim on my regards."

" Methinks you are too young for a philosopher," said the old lady, looking with increased pleasure at the lovely speaker.

" Youth is the season for joy and tenderness," replied Vaga; " and dispensing happiness is the true way to receive it."

Benigma smiled.—" I should like to have some more conversation with you, another opportunity, my dear," said she.

Vaga courtesied gracefully. " The honor you propose, madam," replied

she, “ I gratefully accept; and to deserve it, shall be my future care.”

At this pause Edwy appeared, leading forward a gentleman in decay. His steps were uneven, his face pale and thin, and his voice was feeble.

He caught the offered hand of Benigma; and tears of gratitude and feeling showered down upon it.

Vaga uttered an exclamation. It was the Chevalier whom she remembered to have seen at the Temple of the Muses. He raised his drooping head, and instantly recognizing her, a faint beam of joy irradiated his dejected countenance, and he saluted her respectfully.

The Chevalier adverted to the sorrows of his life—but complained of none.

“ As it has pleased God to afflict me,” said he, “ I shall be taken every

care of here. The doctors are skilful and humane ; and it behoves every servant in the house to be tender and kind to the patients."

" Why were you confined to your cell ?" said Benigma.

" I transgressed rules," said he ; " and the best intentions are liable to misrepresentation. — Children might sleep safe in my bosom ; but I am a lion when attacked, and I believe I was a little unmanageable, in the defence of a poor dog, that I imagined was treated cruelly. But I rescued the animal ; and see where he comes, (pointing to a little black terrier, creeping towards him), to thank me for my friendly interference."

The dog, now kindly caressed by his generous preserver, frisked about him, almost wild with joy ; and then

crouching, lay down at the Chevalier's feet.

"What a lesson for man!" exclaimed Benigma, stroking the animal on the head.—"Yes! poor faithful *brute*, it belongs to your species to *feel* truly so kind a service—because ye are never *forgetful* of it."

"I never could call a dog a brute!" said Vaga. "I never could denominate him less than what he is:—the friend and faithful follower of man."

A nervous affection oppressed the Chevalier; and, the lucid interval past, reclining on Edwy's bosom, he wept like a child. . . . When the dog, springing up, licked his hands and his face; stemming (as it were) with love the torrent of his grief.

"Yes! good dog," said Benigma, (again encouraging the animal), "my

heart interprets what you would say. You are pointing out the remedy for your preserver; and, in impassioned language, telling us (if we would be taught by you), that soothing, gentle tenderness, is a powerful restorative for a diseased mind: and the case we witness, is merely a delirium!—Yes!” she added, “ the great and noble heart, when shaken by emotion, will flutter, in proportion to the strength of its sensations; and it is the curse of sensibility, to feel too acutely:—but, sooner than vent complaint, the proudly injured and resolute spirit will burst an artery—or go mad!—This is the season for friends to qualify these troublesome feelings, by affection and kindness: and had the Chevalier a fond mother, a tender sister, to watch over and console him, how soon would the recovery of his in-

tellects bless and reward their exertions!"

Oh, woman!—Man's supreme joy, and rational delight, you are in the most extended sense. His peace is in your keeping; his happiness, in your bosom; and his felicity is your work. . . . When boisterous, your softness tranquillizes him: when sorrowful, to your gentleness he turns for consolation: when fatigued by toil and care, into your arms he sinks for rest:—and your love is wakeful for him. . . . Your *vices* are derived from *him*: your *virtues* are your *own*! You were born for his good, although he sometimes perverts the blessing! . . . Woman is *more*, and *less*, than man!—If man *fell* by woman: by woman he was *exalted*, and reinstated again; for the Saviour of the world was born of woman.— Woman is more patient than man.—

See her with her offspring at her breast!—Trace her through the several duties of wife and mother; and her perseverance may be considered as characteristic of the sex. Woman is more capable of loving, because she loveth long.—Woman resembles an enslaved state: she is afraid to trust to her own strength: or rather, she knows not the extent of it. In the natural history of woman, nothing can exceed the strength of her affections, but the tenderness and delicacy which refine them: her genuine feelings, like light and shade, throw out the finer and more fugitive lines of character, and the impression is nature herself! On the fair form of beauty, the dispositions of the mind seem to reflect an higher style of loveliness and exterior attractions, so susceptible of that exquisiteness called expression, po-

lished by the powers of intellect. In the mental system of woman may be traced an association of the gentler and more prominent virtues. Alarm the maternal, or tender character, and the attitudes of the female shall faithfully represent all the softness that seduces us to love, blended with a heroism that shall command awful respect.—The character of woman, as here drawn in its general form and features, lays claim to the moral, sublime, and beautiful. It is natural that a lady-artist should cast in shade any little defect existing in the original, and love rather to make a *good picture*, than a likeness. That she has done ample justice to the *merits* of her sex, will be admitted. But, as she professes to respect *truth* above any thing, and every thing, in this world, she must not subject herself to incur

the charge of extravagance, by either a false or partial delineation of the character she has ventured to draw. It is no mean compliment to woman, to glance at the intellectual, as well as personal, empire she might maintain in the order of society. But this remark requires explanation, as I would not be understood—let her excellence even attain its zenith, so as to illustrate what woman ought to be—to offend my own judgement, by giving her an equal rank, in the government of the world, with man. No, Nature has designed it otherwise; and her laws are unerring. Women feel differently, act differently, and their duties lie in another direction. Did women study the essential charge intrusted by the Almighty to their care, we should not have so many turbulent spirits let loose on society,

to disturb its peace. The early infant state devolves on the mother; and the first, second, or third year, forms the bent of the mind, either for virtue, or vice.—The unreflecting and inconsiderate may ridicule my ideas. But I do not wield the pen for them; but appeal to all parents and guardians, who have made children their principal care and study, What science so difficult, as conquering the passions of youth? In order to render females equal to discharge this most arduous task incumbent on them, I think the education of women material to the good of society. But, in the present state of things, if girls can manage to keep time in a country-dance, thrum an air on the piano, chatter bad French, and are expert at the needle, with some knowledge in housekeeping—they are set down as highly ac-

complished.—Then they dress well, flirt promiscuously, and get married.—Thus, without a single requisite of mind, what are they fit for? Certainly not to be man's rational companion ; but, in truth, the slave of his passions. Can such a woman, without reflexion, without knowledge of the world, educate her offspring, till the age they enter school?—To every intelligent mind the answer is obvious ; for it requires judgement, patience, and some sense, to “ train up a child in the way it should go.”—I do not mean, by this dissertation, to convey the idea of a learned lady, (highly as I regard the character), but would portray a well-informed woman, who through all her actions is guided by religion. Happy are those children, who have a steady, judicious pilot to steer them ; and happy the

husband, who finds in his wife a wise and enlightened bosom friend!—But, miserable—Oh, how miserable! is the marriage state, “when,” in the language of a respectable literary personage, “joined to a woman, whose sole “object in life is to pass for a fine “lady! The attentions she every “where uniformly pays, and expects, “and even exacts, are tedious and “fatiguing. Her various movements “and attitudes are all adjusted and “exhibited by rule. By a happy “fluency of the most elegant lan- “guage, she has the art of imparting “a momentary dignity and grace to “the merest trifles. And, studious “only to mimic such peculiarities as “are most admired in others, she “affects a loquacity peculiarly flip- “pant and teasing; because scandal, “routs, finery, fans, china, lovers,

“ lap-dogs, or squirrels, are her constant themes. Her amusements, “ like those of a magpie, are only “ hopping over the same spots, prying “ into the same corners, and devour- “ ing the same species of prey. The “ simple and beautiful delineations of “ nature, in her countenance, ges- “ tures, and whole deportment, are “ habitually deranged, distorted, or “ concealed, by the affected adoption “ of whatever grimace or deformity is “ last and most in vogue. She ac- “ customs her face to a simper, which “ every separate feature in it belies : “ spoils, perhaps, a blooming com- “ plexion, with a profusion of artifi- “ cial colouring ; distorts the most “ exquisite shape by loads or volumes “ of useless drapery ; and has her head, “ her arms, her feet, and her gait, “ equally touched by art and affecta-

“ tion, in what is called the taste, the  
“ ton, or the fashion.

“ She little considers to what a  
“ torrent of ridicule and sarcasm this  
“ mode of conduct exposes her; or  
“ how exceedingly cold and low that  
“ ceremony must be, which is not the  
“ language of a warm heart; how in-  
“ sipid those smiles which indicate  
“ no internal pleasantry; how awk-  
“ ward those graces which spring not  
“ from habits of good nature and  
“ benevolence. Thus, pertness suc-  
“ ceeds to delicacy, assurance to  
“ modesty, and all the vagaries of a  
“ listless, to all the sensibilities of an  
“ ingenuous, mind. Destined as she  
“ is, in common with the sex, and  
“ fitted by the common peculiar  
“ liberality of nature, to polish and  
“ console humanity, a woman of this  
“ description never exerts a thought

“ beyond the requisitions of the ton,  
“ the homage due to rank, family,  
“ parade, and personal decoration.  
“ With her, punctilio is politeness;  
“ dissipation, life; and levity, spirit.  
“ The miserable and contemptible  
“ drudge of every tawdry innovation  
“ in dress or ceremony, she incessant-  
“ ly mistakes extravagance for taste;  
“ finery, for elegance; and fashion, for  
“ whatever strikes her as most incon-  
“ gruous to simplicity and nature.  
“ By flaunting the abject puppet of  
“ every insignificant and preposterous  
“ farce to which the fashionable  
“ world gives a temporary sanction  
“ and celebrity, her whole care and  
“ attention are engrossed by circum-  
“ stance and show. To her the deli-  
“ cious recollection of an open, artless,  
“ and worthy life, are not half so  
“ charming, as the various tiresome

“ insipidities and inquietudes of a  
“ giddy one. Every idea of sub-  
“ stantial felicity is habitually ab-  
“ sorbed in the flattering and frantic  
“ intoxications of female vanity.

“ It is not, therefore, intrinsic  
“ merit, but a tinselled exterior,  
“ which attracts her esteem; and  
“ she values neither candour of  
“ mind, nor modesty of carriage,  
“ when opposed to flutter or parade.  
“ Her favourite examples are not  
“ those persons of acknowledged  
“ sincerity, who speak as they feel,  
“ and act as they think; but such  
“ only as are found to dazzle her  
“ fancy, amuse her senses, or humour  
“ her whims. Her only study is how  
“ to glitter or shine, how to captivate  
“ and gratify the gaze of the multi-  
“ tude, or how to swell her own pomp  
“ and importance. To this interest-

“ ing object all her assiduities and  
“ time are religiously devoted. This  
“ makes her the slave of every no-  
“ veltiy, which levity, or extrava-  
“ gance, or luxury, brings up; in-  
“ variably prescribes that superfluity  
“ in dress and equipage of which she  
“ is so fond, and addicts her to the  
“ mechanical practice of every punc-  
“ tilio or artifice, which folly sug-  
“ gests, or proudly imposes.

“ The mortifications to which this  
“ contemptible and fastidious turn of  
“ mind exposes and subjects her, are  
“ various, and without end. Her ap-  
“ proaches are deemed intrusion; her  
“ affability, form or artifice, the mere  
“ etiquette of the sex. She is always  
“ encroaching, and always repulsed;  
“ and is, for the most part, last, only  
“ from a violent propensity to be first.  
“ It is because she would be above all,

“ that all are so much interested in  
“ keeping her down. The general dis-  
“ position which there manifestly is  
“ to keep her back, originates solely  
“ in her embracing little manœuvres  
“ for putting herself forward. We  
“ check impudence as naturally as  
“ we encourage modesty. A woman  
“ of this kind, consequently, is herself  
“ the dupe of all those artifices and  
“ schemes, which she incessantly  
“ and unsuccessfully practises on  
“ others.”

“ Is there no way that we can be  
of service to the Chevalier?” inquired  
Vaga, tenderly contemplating the noble  
ruin.

“ His fortune is independent,” re-  
plied Benigma, “ and his connexions  
are of the first rank in the kingdom.  
However, these acquisitions do not  
exclude friendship and benevolence.

We may cherish and watch over him."

"An angel is my guardian!" said the Chevalier; "and that is Benigma!"

"Yes, my friend," rejoined the old lady, "Providence has given you to me in care; and as I honour the sacred charge, so may Heaven support, or abandon me!—Trust to your old Benigma, for she is not to be brow-beaten or flattered. She is not one of those over-squeamish ladies, who would make it appear, that they tremble at the sight of a straw, lest a doubt of their effeminacy should be entertained; and, under this false notion, literally become drones in society; useless, and good for nothing."

The noble sufferer, now tolerably composed, the party took their leave; and though tears of regret trembled

in his eyes, suppressing his feelings, he saw them depart with apparent cheerfulness, on receiving a promise that they would visit him soon again.

“Ladies,” said the Chevalier, (speaking with all the rapidity of excessive feeling), “ye have visited the house of wo, to comfort the wretched—and your reward lies not with me; but with Him, who made ye, as ye are, matchless.”

The gate closed after them, by Cerberus, a surly porter.—“Yes!” cried Benigma, accepting Edwy’s offered arm; “that creature is all gratitude; and his generosity exaggerates the smallest civility shown him, into an important service.—He has been stung into madness! But, all this will cease.—There must be a period to human suffering; and my hopes were never stronger, than at this instant.—Tell

me then, sweet girl," (anxiously regarding Vaga), " when, and where, shall we meet again, if it be only to lament, together, the unhappy fate of the great and good?"

" Madam!" replied Vaga (blushing, from delicacy), " I am in an obscure lodging; but I shall be happy to wait on you whenever your pleasure permits."

" Then," said the old lady, (presenting a printed card to Vaga), you have my address; and, if unengaged, perhaps you and this young gentleman (bowing to Edwy) will favor me with your company this evening. I shall be alone, and I wish to cultivate your acquaintance."

The invitation accepted, and the suitable acknowledgements made, Vaga and Edwy returned home, charmed with their new acquaint-

ance: and our heroine, warm in the praise of Benigma, was relating to Chili the several occurrences of the morning; when another sealed packet, brought by the post, was delivered to Vaga, who hastily running her eyes over the cover, exclaimed—

“ ‘Tis marked a money letter, and directed to me!” Then, impatiently breaking the wax, a parcel of bank paper dropt out, which proved national notes, in value twenty thousand pounds.

The epistle that enveloped this treasure, has the next claim on our attention.

“ Estimable Vaga!

“ Whom no vanity could tempt to squander means—given to her in trust for the poor—know, that the enclosed sum is your own.—Vaga! sweet essence of generosity and truth!—Oh!

child of virtue! rare as the plant that flowers but once in a century! you evince the master-hand!—May the God, from whom you sprung, bless and guide my wanderer!—You are his, you were mine, and still belong to millions!—Keep the post of benevolence while you stay on earth, and your powers to do good shall be unbounded as your beneficence!—Your utmost expenditure shall be as a drop in the ocean; for the wealth that supplies you is inexhaustible!—I have not found out the secret of the philosopher's stone; but I have explored a mine rich in treasure, and Vaga shall prove the true value of it, by appropriating it to the right use. You have not a feeling heart given to you in vain. Nor have you been sent here for naught. Your heart is your own; but your hand is with the world. Let

no idle fears, or petty alarms, turn you from your duty: nothing minor disturb your freedom of thought and action. . . . And now, Vaga, be great, as well as good! Be your views extensive as the globe you inhabit! Look from an individual to a whole race: and next direct your attention to the world *en masse!* . . . 'Tis sweet to have a country to love! 'Tis glorious to regard it! To live for the benefit of the nation we call our own, is delightful! —and to die in her service, is heroic! But greater still the man, whose ample mind can take in all humankind, and with fraternal love embrace the universe.—Visit foreign countries. Travel leads to knowledge: and glean experience as you go along.—From England, take a survey of other nations, and read that comprehensive and instructive volume, entitled

*men and manners!*—The friendly understanding at present with France, smiles auspicious on your projected tour, and will give a safe escort to my wanderer.—Away, then! and may peace go in your train!—I dare not wish you more: I dare not expect more on earth for you!—Let your equipage be princely.—Your worth is visible only to few, of the few in your sphere; and even these, as yet, imperfectly understand you.—Never hope, by the mere exercise of your faculties, to gain either the regard or the respect of common minds; because to you they apply a false train of reasoning, applicable only to themselves.—Dazzle those whom you cannot enlighten. 'Tis the blaze of the sun that strikes the vulgar. Hence I would have Genius hide her head; and, solitary as the bird of wisdom,

retire from the impertinent gaze—unless surrounded by all the attributes of fortune! . . . Stay six weeks longer in this metropolis, and attract notice by your splendour. Fix your establishment at the most fashionable hotel, and cultivate an acquaintance with the world.—Prior to your departure you shall hear again from your

“ BATHMENDI.”

“ Dublin, October 31st, 1801.”

What a revolution, in a single day, took place in the fate of our heroine! Called from obscurity, to take a leading part, thus early, on the great stage of life; behold her, in her seventeenth year, preparing to take the reins committed to her management, in the arduous journey marked out before

her.—How she will acquit herself, the event alone can tell: but, when we take into our consideration the numerous difficulties and dangers in her road :—even the surrounding air spoiled by infectious depravity :—oh! can we expect unsuspecting innocence (a character too often undermined by the false arts of others) to preserve its purity, when assailed by the tainted breath of pestilence and plague?

Chili, by this time beginning to experience a little amendment, gladly hailed an arrangement that promised much towards her restoration; for it is well known, that the influence of a southern climate on debilitated constitutions, has wonderful efficacy; particularly when labouring under any rheumatic affection; from which our poor patient suffered severely.

When in what manner best to proceed had been debated and agreed upon, Vaga and Edwy went to Benigma's lodging; to whom, without reserve, they imparted the late wonderful occurrence; omitting nothing in which Bathmendi was concerned: and this lady (truly a philanthropist, and ardent in her admiration of the parties) offered to conduct and patronize the wanderer, Vaga.

“ My dear,” said she, “ in all ages, Pagan, or otherwise, the *golden calf* has been set up, and worshipped.—Your fortune once known, you will be sought, and your alliance courted.—Those locusts, who feed and fatten on the rich, will swarm around you; and, unless you are armed against the venom they emit, it will wound and annoy you.—Sink not deep; but ra-

ther skim lightly over the surface of society. The votaries of pleasure and dissipation will present to your lips an enchanting beverage ; but, if you drink of this ambrosia, it will poison you ! . . . . Thorns perpetually spring in our path—and flowers are thinly scattered ! . . . . The garden's pride, the rose, if incautiously approached, its stem will catch, and pierce ! . . . . We will view all—and pluck none ; for the fruit must ripen, and mature, ere it attains its proper flavour ; and, even then, it requires some portion of judgement to decide upon it."

Benigma was a bankrupt only in fortune. Her rank in life was highly respectable. She was a colonel's widow : and her husband, a gallant officer, fell on the plains of America, rallying and cheering his men to the charge.—While Benigma was in opu-

lence, flatterers and followers were in her suite. Her society was deemed an honour—her opinions quoted, as infallible—and her protection solicited! However, the prey once devoured, the “gad-flies of the land” left the bones to bleach in the sun!

When Benigma ceased to make feasts, “for wise men to eat,” her visitors dropped off; and her acquaintance, if they met her, *filed* either to the right or left; or, affecting absence, looked her full in the face, and passed on.—But there was still one rallying point, as will be seen, when the fashionables, from all quarters, flocked to Vaga’s standard.

The golden key is a grand engine! It gains access to every thing, in an outward point of view. This was illustrated by the eclat that attended

Vaga's first appearance in the great world. Her carriage was of the most new and elegant style, drawn by six beautiful and expensive greys. Her retinue displayed eastern magnificence: and though the feathered sceptre was substituted, by her modesty and truth, in place of an usurped coronet; however light in estimation this crest of honour, (more calculated to excite the sneer of envy, than a due smile of admiration), she was indisputably acknowledged immensely rich:—an argument of such weight, in the scale of public opinion, that the imposing claimant's blood and ancestry, strange to say, were thrown out, in the balance.—Her circle formed under Benigma's introduction; visiting cards and invitations waited on Vaga in constant succession!—Nothing was sought, nothing was talked of, but

the lovely stranger: and curiosity, not yet satisfied, kept up that hurry of spirits so beneficial to some, because the only exercise of the vacant mind; without which, it would sink into total inanity.—Who she was, and where she came from, was still a doubt; nay, a general question.

The *Mundunguses* scornfully declared, it did not give them a thought, as they made it a rule to look above, never beneath them. The *Levellers* next agreed, that *upstarts* certainly were *notorious* for pulling every one down to their own level; but, as to them, they only desired to put people in their proper places.... That money did not comprehend *all* in this life, though *base metal* passed current. That riches could not make a gentleman; or purchase contentment: and, that a showy *outside* was often

hollow *within*! — The *Strappers*, of Tatterdash-hall, insisted, that Vaga showed little, though she possessed so much; for that she had no more body, than what barely served as a vehicle for her mind! that she had not an ounce of flesh on her! that she was meagre and wan;—and, that all her charms lay in her purse! The *Insipids*, taking a part in the debate, tamely replied; that, as far as they saw, she appeared to be rather out of the *common*; and that many, who were judges, asserted she was a nice woman: however, that the most voices ought to carry it; and the majority always decided for them.

A number of nameless personages, now starting up, in turn pronounced:—

One gave a charge *for*, and *against*! another, pale with malignity and dis-

trust, observed ; that “ little said, is soonest mended.”—More appealed to the auditory, as witnesses of their tenderness, in passing sentence, and said : —that they would not for the world insinuate any thing without proof, *because contrary to law* ; but, that *thoughts* are our own!—That circumstances were remarkable ; and that in desperate cases, such as *murder*, &c. appearances were looked to, and often proceeded on, as positive evidence!—That fame was busy with Vaga.—That an outcry of tongues re-echoed throughout the city.—That some stated her charity knew no bounds.—That others affirmed she was a mere pretender.—That many more whispered she was a young man! and, that the received opinion was, that she was a *Turk* in disguise!

Though Vaga endeavoured to conform herself to the usage of the world, she yet contrived neither to violate delicacy nor good sense. Her dress and manners were as they should be: —the former, elegant and appropriate; the latter, fascinating, graceful, and dignified:—and neither, a satire on the freedom of the age.—The young men of ton talked to her, and tried her: they admitted she was a charming woman; but no dash—no spirit! However, she was just the thing for a wife:—would do to be thrown aside, when better, or worse, came in the way —And, then, that her thousands had power over the hearts of most men, was instanced by daily proposals of marriage with which all the adorers in town addressed her.—Nor were all the proposals made to Vaga, confined to love, or hymen; as she had

numerous applications from money borrowers, and even from money lenders!—But the good Benigma hovered about her as a protecting guardian; shielding her from every harm, and continually leading her to do good: and many were the important services rendered by Vaga to the suffering indigent; who, too proud to beg, literally die the death of necessity, amid all the wantonness of a wealthy and luxurious capital, where half the money, that is consumed on superfluities, on folly, and on vice, would preserve distressed thousands from perishing! Nor was Vaga's benevolence confined to the distribution of wealth; for, whensoever occasion required it, she admonished, and exhorted.—One day, hearing a young woman say, that God had bestowed on her every good, but riches; Vaga inquired, Whether

she was virtuous and honest? and being answered in the affirmative—

“ Then,” replied Vaga, “ I cannot say so much for myself; for none can with justice assert they are so, until they have been tried.—See me poor,” continued Vaga, “ wanting the means to purchase the necessaries of life, and place in my lap a hoard of wealth; which if I preserve untouched for the owner;—then am I honest.—Show me the chosen object of my heart’s love and respect: let him be captivating, almost irresistible;—if I resist that being, then am I virtuous.”

Vaga visited the poor, but generally in disguise. She soothed and comforted the unfortunate; and she caressed little children.

By \* \* \* \* \* orders, a prohibition was enacted, at St. Patrick’s Hospital, to the exclusion of all visitors, with-

out a governor's permission; and it struck Benigma, that this statute was put in force against her.

“Alas alas!” said she, “even the last retreat of human misery is subject to the misuse of power! Hence privation to the sufferer. Hence the voice of comfort is shut out. But, when I am heart-sick, Oh, Vaga! on you I repose: for you are my strength and my solace.—Darling of my grateful heart, you are about to leave me; and, when wanting you, I shall be desolate indeed. But you will remember your solitary friend, will you not?—Yes! Vaga’s memory is as good as her heart!—Go, then, child of my adoption and love!—May Heaven dispense with your presence long! And when you take a nobler flight, in rising from the grave to a life of immortality, let the bright prospect of end-

less glory reanimate every faculty of your soul!"

"Nay, nay," said Vaga, "we must not part so soon.—Benigma will accompany the wanderer. Your wisdom shall guide me, and Edwy's courage shall protect me.—We will mix in the busy throng, yet shall we be all to each other.—No society so dear, no converse so delightful, as friendship, sweetened by love."

'Tis the province of the malignant to interfere with that which does not concern them; and, though messengers of ill news are always unwelcome, and seldom well received, they find a peculiar gratification in giving circulation to a bad story: and it was on such a good-natured errand a fair lady came, almost out of breath, with a newspaper in her hand:—

"Madam," said she, "this article

in The Advertiser is levelled at you ; and, with your permission, I'll read the paragraph."

The volubility of the speaker precluded the possibility of a reply. Vaga could barely edge in a bow, when the lady began :—

" Be it known to all whom it may concern, (witches and wizards only excepted,) that a spirit has been seen, in this city, in the shape of a woman ! but, as some doubt exists as to the true sex, we are inclined to believe that a jury of matrons must assemble, to decide upon it. 'Tis said, that it has got wings, but that it never flaps them to the annoyance of any.—That the Loves and the Graces, and even an Adonis, sport in its train ! —That a lovely youth is perpetually dangling at its side, to the exclusion of the whole male world :—

That it seems to be in a thriving way! . . . . . That, though suspected to be game, it never gives tongue!—That it rides Pegasus all the morning; and is employed in making baby-linen all night.—That some insist it has no head—but a very soft heart.—And, finally, that it hangs out at the sign of the Good Woman, in \* \* \* \* \* Street.

Vaga fainted—and Benigma showed the scandalous chronicler the shortest way down stairs:—a trespass, which the offended fair, as she went out, declared the law should chastize.

The insult, thus insidiously couched, fell on Vaga like a thunder-bolt.—Her character was impeached, her purity suspected: and her sense of innocence being insufficient to combat the blow, she sunk under it, unresisting.—Oh! the assault was

deadly, and managed in ambuscade!—That sharp-shooter, Calumny, pierced the heart of its victim; and the wound would have proved mortal, had it not been for the aid of religion and philosophy.—But maternal love and friendship did all for Vaga.—In Chili's bosom her sorrows found a balm; and Benigma was a salutary and tender nurse.

Not so poor Edwy,—the unhappy, but innocent cause, through whose side the dart had been pointed at Vaga.

“Has my grateful love,” said he, “blasted the reputation that it would rather save?—Oh, Vaga! the remedy for you is in my hand.—The past I shall always regard as a delightful dream:—but, I’m roused—and shall build your future fame on the ruins of my peace.—Self-love, by robbing you, would doubly take from me: and

Vaga deprived of an honorable reputation, I should be poor indeed!— Virtue can seal up the lips of malevolence, and *look away* all that's malicious: and I shall exert this power! The 'choice of Hercules' henceforth be mine: and the goddess, no doubt, will assist and direct me, as she did her immortal disciple, in the research of true happiness and honour."

This train of thought absorbing Edwy's mind, though he had entered the Commercial Coffee-room for the purpose of reading the news of the day, he sat down at one of the tables, and resting his head on his hand, appeared there without any apparent object.

There were a number of persons assembled, and politics were the general pursuit.

"The little Corsican is friendly to England at last," said one.

“ I hope the peace will be permanent,” cried another.

“ That is, as hereafter may happen,” interposed a third.

“ Buonaparte is the devil!” said a fourth.

“ The devil is not blacker than he’s painted!” cried a fifth.

“ Call him a spirit!” interrupted a sixth.

“ Nay, nay,” interposed a number of voices; “ a caveat against that; for the spirit is with us:—The Advertiser, to witness.”

An elderly gentleman, hitherto listening attentively, now sighed so deeply, that the tone of sensibility struck Edwy with a sensation which much impressed him.

“ Is it still in town?” inquired a fop, adjusting his cravat before a looking-glass, in front of the chimney-piece.

“ Lord ! sir,” replied an officer, rising, and parading the floor,—“ have you lived so much out of the world, as not to know the charming Vaga? —Fascinating, delightful creature!—Usually go my morning rounds at half past four p. m.—met her on the promenade at the square ;—dropped my sword, and gave her the *general salute*.—However, Adonis brought up his *right shoulder*, and Venus retired with her favourite :—a mere chip-in-pottage of a fellow ! But what need I wonder ; since the Union, the want of *beaux* in the country, has qualified the ladies not a little.—Rather than not have some one dancing attendance on a public walk, a belle will suffer even a dummy to Philander her : for instance, who in such demand with the Dublin ladies, for a time, as ‘ Tom Thumb?’ a little, well behaved man,

who held his tongue, and made love on his fingers."

" Ay!" replied the fop; " I remember . . . but, speak low, Don't you see the Adonis, yonder, measuring you with his eyes from head to foot?"

" What!" called out the officer, (looking angrily at Edwy), " Have we got tailors among us?—I never permit any one to measure me but my tailor."

Edwy, no longer able to command his indignation, walking fiercely up to the officer, said :

" As to your impertinent question, I shall not take the trouble to answer it: but I make no scruple to tell you, that there is a scoundrel in the present company! a wanton defamer of female innocence, who shall swallow his words, or with our blood we must wash out the injury!"

The officer seized Edwy's arm :—

“ Do you mean me ? ” said he ; his voice half-choked with passion.

“ If you are not uncommonly dull of apprehension,” replied Edwy, firmly, “ my meaning is not very difficult to be understood.”

Some of the gentlemen now interfered.

“ Captain ! ” said the fop, seconded by one or two more ; “ surely you cannot think of meeting a person, without first being satisfied that he has been born a gentleman ? ”

“ I stake my respectability that he is a gentleman ! ” replied the elderly man whose sighing had attracted Edwy, now coming forward : and his voice silencing all present, the officer put into Edwy’s hand his card—calling out aloud, as he *marched* off—

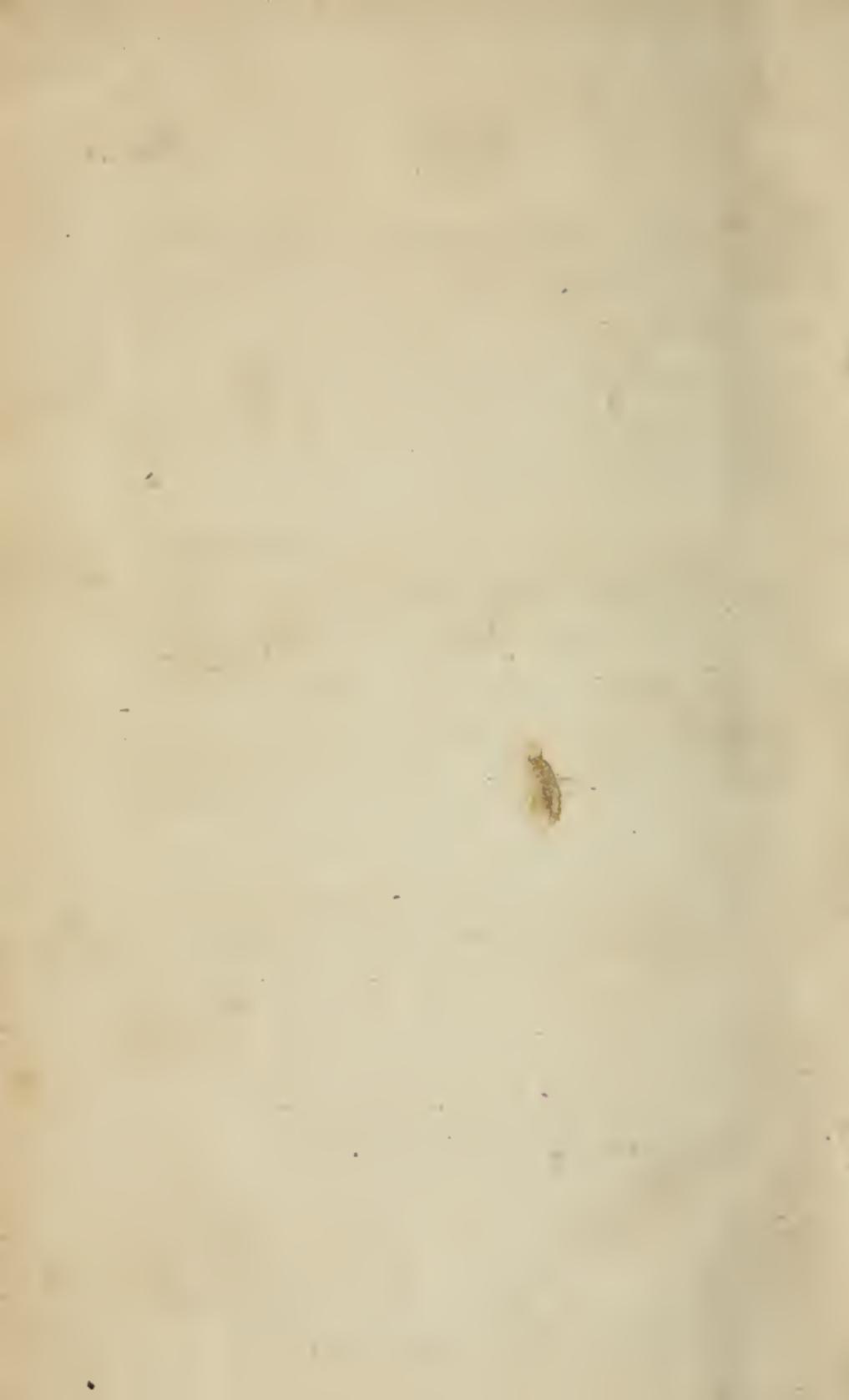
“ Should you have any commands for me, this *ticket* will inform you where I am to be found.”

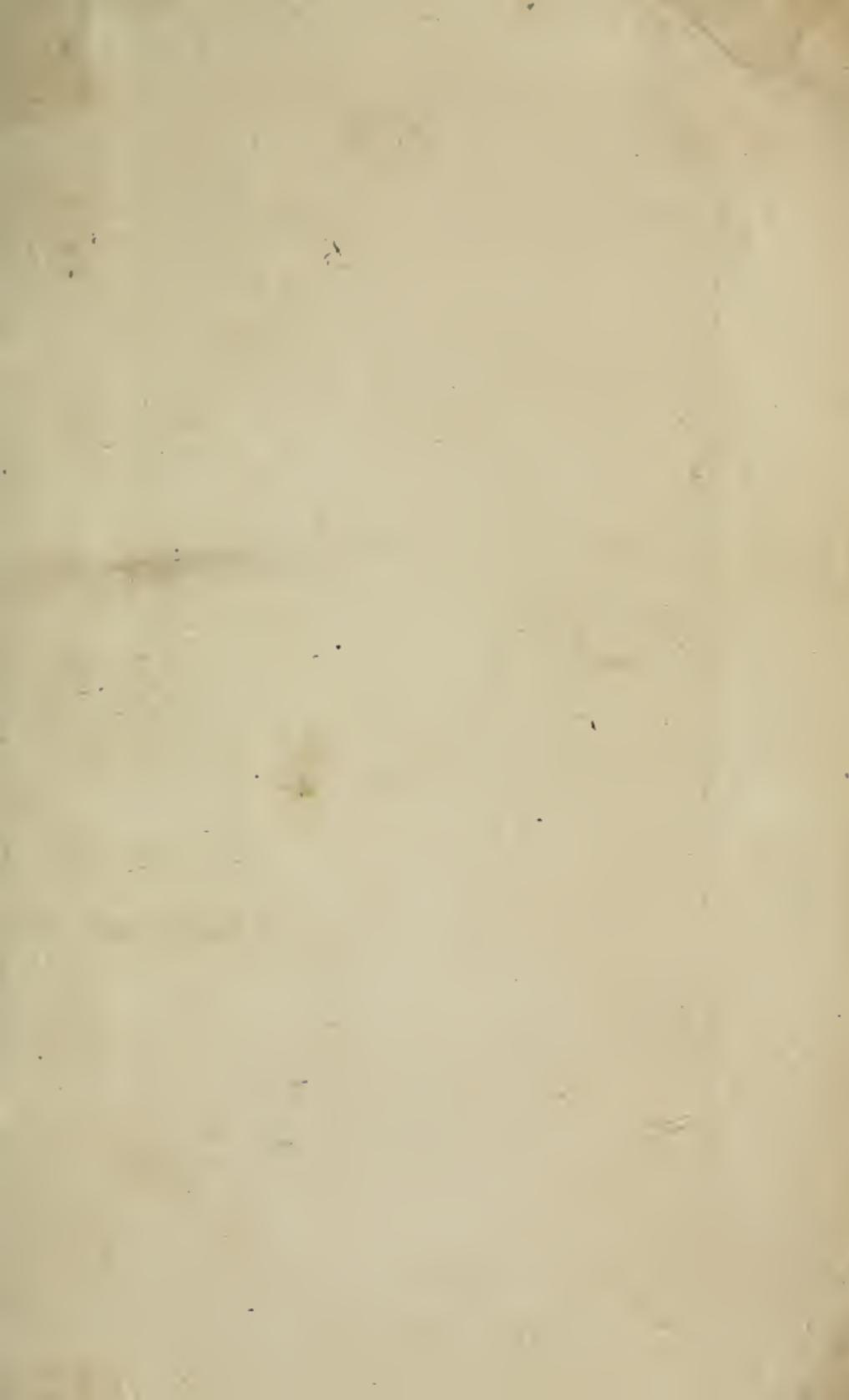
Edwy, broiling with rage, was about to retire; but, casting his eyes round, in search of the venerable stranger, who had so kindly interposed for him; he perceived him at his side, and gratefully tendered his acknowledgements.

“ Come!” said the old gentleman, taking hold of Edwy’s arm, and hurrying him away; “ you serve under the banner of a lady, and, as her knight-errant, you must with your life defend her.—Permit me, then, to be the herald of your sentiments to Captain Swaggeraro, the celebrated duellist of the age.”

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







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